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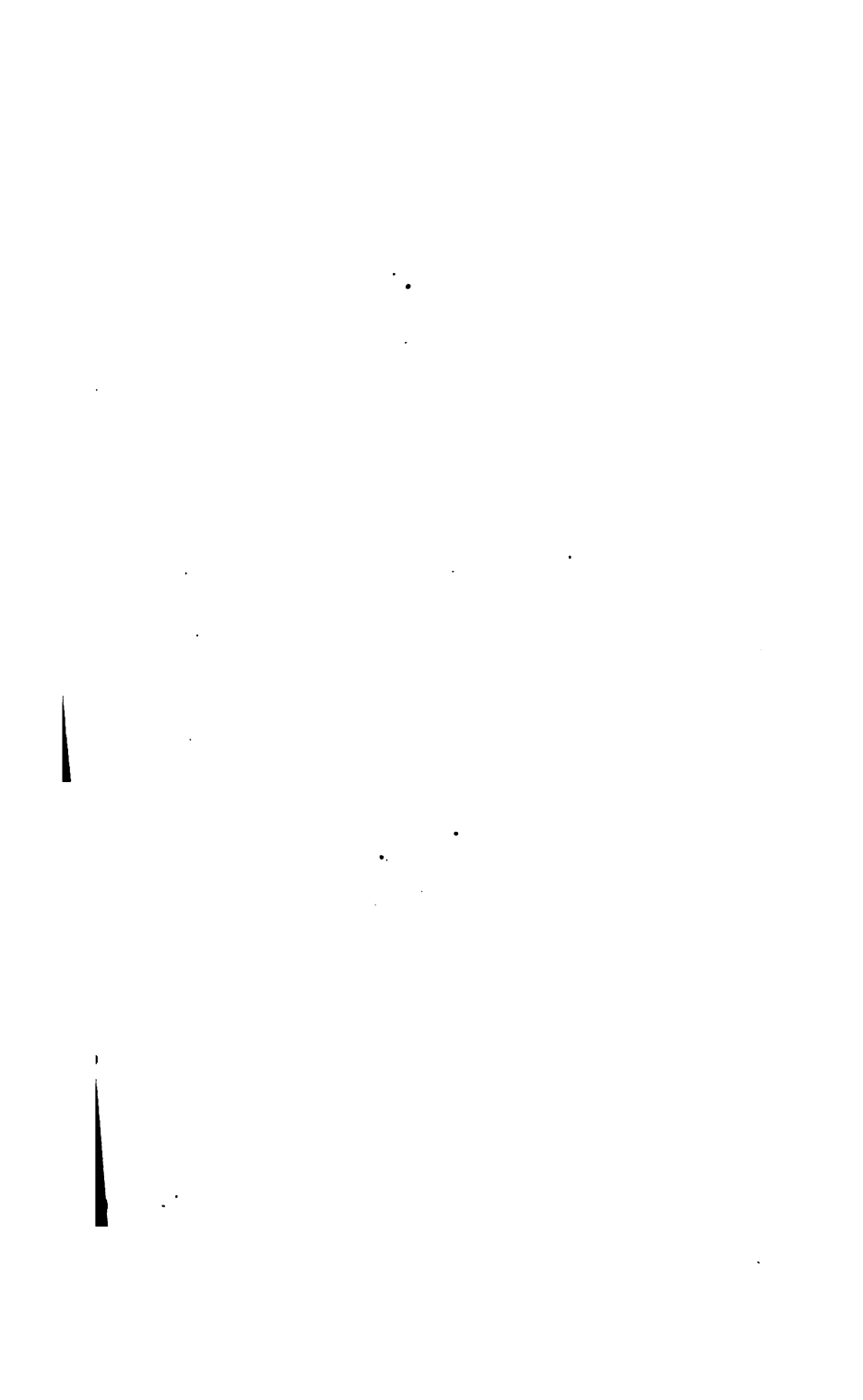
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HOW THEY
MISMANAGED THEIR HOUSE
ON
£500 A YEAR.

A Narrative,

IN ONE VOLUME.



BY

MR. WARREN.

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HOW THEY MISMANAGED THEIR HOUSE ON £500 A-YEAR.

CHAPTER I.

BEFORE I begin to indite one page of this forthcoming narrative, let me advise all lovers of three-volume novels to shun at once these pages. I assure them, there are no plots deeply laid to be found here. Perusers, behold the title! and ere disappointment cometh, wisely retire. Rush home and seize your “charming fellows,” and “horrid girls,” and

forget the existence of this work. Some wise old authors, who have held their plumes nearly a quarter of a century, may, haply, inwardly consider me a fool for thus inscribing my sentiments. They may think that I should have rather invited them to peruse these pages for a change, instead of so unwisely flouting them in the downright manner I have just done. If this be so, those Christians must continue to think so: yet I would rather they took my counsel in this matter. But to my tale; and, dear reader, you must consent to a little dull information at first as I introduce to you the characters to be described.

The head of the great O'Lavish family came originally from the Emerald Isle, as the O may indicate to some of my readers. He was a hard-working individual in the Irish weaving line;

made at one time large returns, till a reverse of circumstances, over which he had no control, obliged him to give up his occupation. He came to England, settled somewhere up in the North, doing something, till he gave up that something to do something else in smoky Manchester. All this I fear is very dreary information to the lively reader, but I am happy to say he is not going to have much more such dry intelligence.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish (for that was his name) was fortunate enough to meet with a public appointment, which brought him in a steady five hundred pounds yearly. He was, therefore, totally free from the harassing life of a professional mortal. He had never the unpleasing task of running up his debit accounts only to find them larger than

his credit. This, happily, spared him from pulling long faces over his ledger, and wondering how he should make two ends meet. Happy man! five hundred pounds a-year till death doth him sever from such a comfortable sufficiency.

When Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had been fortunate enough to meet with his appointment he immediately busied his brains about choosing a suitable house. His former habitation was a common dull lodging-house in the ugliest row of houses biped man, I should think, ever erected. One of those dirty-white, small-roomed, badly-built, hateful habitations that unfortunately so largely abound in our "Merrie England," and which, let us hope, in the advance of civilization, and all knowledge of what is most healthful, will

become scarcer and scarcer. We may forgive the gentleman in question for wishing immediately to decamp for more cheering quarters. That he had lost no time in thus doing, may be deduced from the fact that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish left his doleful abode in Slush Street, in the middle of March, and long ere it was "the tenth of April morn by the chime," he was comfortably settled in Mayfair House. I hope no reader will object if I describe, in a geographical manner, the situation of Mayfair House.

It was bounded on the north by a distant park, on the south by an excellent garden, on the west by St. Michael's Church, and on the east by the necessary outhouses of the habitations of man. If there were at all any drawbacks to living at Mayfair House, croakers might com-

plain that it stood on a fair eminence, and that it was destitute of the convenience of gas. Even Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, though he had been used to burning gas in his late unlovely abode, seemed to be content to forego that modern convenience. Yet, I fear that worthy, ere he has experienced twelve months of candle and oil-lamp burning, will inwardly wish for modern gas-apparatus. If we are patient, we shall see whether our hero put up with candles and oil-lamps; but I rather divine—if I know the character at all of the tenant of the Mayfair habitation—that Madam Gas will be courted at last.

CHAPTER II.

BEFORE I am asked the pertinent question whether Mr. Leonard O'Lavish dwelt solus in Mayfair House, I will inform everybody that that Christian gentleman certainly did not. By no means; he removed with his limited household effects some remarkable live-stock, in the shape of a devoted wife, two domestics, a duck, and a tom cat. These charming animals were the light of his eyes. It was a lucky and delightful fact for the duck, I always think, that a pond existed not very far from his master's pump, where a little sport, if nothing to devour, might be obtained. The poor creature, hitherto, had passed a dry time of it, altogether; the

only refreshment it having been used to being to stand near the pump in the yard, and get splashed occasionally. Had any ornithologist been apprised of the way it led its life, he would, doubtless, have stared with amazement to see the bird look so healthy. But, 'tis true, there are yet marvels to be found under the sun. As I think that some may be wanting to hear about some one a little more interesting than the duck in question, namely, Mrs Leonard O'Lavish, I will at once dwell on that lady. She was a native of smoky Manchester, daughter of a gentleman doing a fair practice in the pill and plaster profession. Agreeable in society, though she was not noted for making very brilliant remarks, yet she was gifted with a certain very useful talent—that of keeping up conversation, though talking on nothing par-

ticular. This lady, I must proceed to state, was fond of show ; always dined late, and never was known to order a suet-dumpling, or, at all events, only for kitchen consumption. The many other qualities she possessed will, I fancy, appear in black and white, ere my pen has terminated this story. It may be reasonably supposed, that having been but a month in their new abode, the O'Lavishs were not what one may call quite settled. There were still many little domestic arrangements to be performed. The household effects being not at all plentiful, some careful dispensing was required to get the best foot forward. This, both were entirely desirous of doing. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish made strenuous efforts to make all things nice around him. He had actually, already, gone to the expense of purchasing

three more oil-lamps, of which, so he told his wife afterwards, he had totally forgot to enquire the price. As he was not a man entirely unmoved by "the concord of sweet sounds," one day he treated himself to a cottage piano, which he imagined he had purchased very cheap ; but this might be questioned, I think, when he had divulged the amount he had given for it. £50 for a second-hand cottage piano, in these days, is a lump of hard cash rather too large. It had been difficult at first to ascertain whether Mrs. O'Lavish was pleased or displeased with her husband's purchase. First she exclaimed, "Whatever did you get it for? we don't require a piano;" then immediately followed the remark that she was glad he bought it, as it would do nicely to place in the drawing-room ; so that had the poor piano been.

a sensate being, it might have been much mortified at its queer reception. In a few days Mr. O'Lavish incurred another expense. There happened to be an auction close by, so that worthy strolled one morning, "just to look about him a little, and see what's what," as he remarked to his wife on the fatal auction morning. It would certainly have been better, on the whole, for the inmates of Mayfair House, if the master thereof had turned his feet elsewhere; since the result of going auction-ways was, that he had become the possessor of ten indifferent prints, more fit for the walls of a third-rate tavern, than any other dwelling I know of. Dear artist-readers, and all art-critics, I am not going to name the subjects of the sorry prints just mentioned; if ever you enter the O'Lavish's dwelling-house,

three more oil-lamps, of which, so he told his wife afterwards, he had totally forgot to enquire the price. As he was not a man entirely unmoved by "the concord of sweet sounds," one day he treated himself to a cottage piano, which he imagined he had purchased very cheap ; but this might be questioned, I think, when he had divulged the amount he had given for it. £50 for a second-hand cottage piano, in these days, is a lump of hard cash rather too large. It had been difficult at first to ascertain whether Mrs. O'Lavish was pleased or displeased with her husband's purchase. First she exclaimed, "Whatever did you get it for? we don't require a piano;" then immediately followed the remark that she was glad he bought it, as it would do nicely to place in the drawing-room ; so that had the poor piano been.

Be it known, that it took Mr. Leonard O'Lavish nearly a fortnight to determine the arrangement of his sorry prints. One especially odious to his devoted wife, he would have hung directly opposite the door, so it was impossible to overlook the ugly affair as you entered the room. This was excessively vexatious to Mrs. O'Lavish, who had a "leetle" idea of what was proper. Her husband was not to be bullied out of his wish; therefore, the ugly affair hangs as he had placed it unto this hour. One morning, as Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and his wife were breaking their fast on coffee, mutton kidneys, and other delicacies, they were both of them simultaneously smitten with a keen desire to go shopping. It was a rare occurrence, for, generally, when Mr. Leonard

O'Lavish wished to go into town, his precious wife desired to stay at home ; and so contrariwise. It was certainly true that a night or two ago, they had had an important conversation about purchasing a lawn-mower, and one or two other small effects needful for the garden. This, therefore, might have been the reason for going shopping ; perhaps, a natural one, too ; but I am of opinion they had other motives prompting them to toddle town-ways.

It needed no acute observation to see that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish much needed a new morning suit ; nor would it have taken much eyesight to have observed that his devoted wife's bonnet was old and shabby. Something suddenly reminds me that some may deem these pages dull, trivial, and exceedingly domestic. If this be true, I must remind

the acute critic—first, of the nature of the title on the back of this book ; and secondly, of what I have intimated before, and reiterate now, that “ I advise all lovers of three-volumed novels to shun at once these pages, and to push home and seize their ‘ charming fellows ’ and ‘ horrid girls,’ and forget the existence of this work.” If they take not my advice, certainly, I at least shall not be blameworthy.

But to return. When the brace of O’Lavishs had done duty towards breakfast, they lost no time in preparing to go to town. Some little delay, however, was occasioned by Mrs. O’Lavish’s pet duck endeavouring to follow them on their urban ambulations. It was in vain that Mr. Leonard O’Lavish flouted it home to its proper abode ; and though certain harmless missiles were expelled from his

amiable hand, the devoted duck seemed undaunted; up it waddled again with renewed energies, meeting with huffs and cuffs, but braving them all. Mrs. O'Lavish could stand waiting no longer, and vowed the duck should be slain and roasted for dinner if it behaved in that troublesome manner. At this juncture the duck set quacking; perhaps it was defying the terrible threats of his mistress, or vowing deadly vengeance. At length the wilful bird was captured and confined, which set our worthy couple free "to gang their own gait."

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had no little difficulty in re-considering what he required to purchase that morning; but not so with his wife: what she required stood as clear in her mind's eye as ever—a new bonnet, a Spring gown, and a new pair of walking-boots. We

may forgive the worthy wife forgetting all about lawn-mowers and other garden effects, when such much more important affairs as bonnets, boots, and Spring gowns, occupied the whole of her thoughts.

As the two passed the enticing shops in the town, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish experienced some trouble in being perpetually pulled by his coat sleeve, and requested to stop and gaze on gay garments.

No doubt, some of my readers will entirely sympathise with him, as, more likely than not, they have gone shopping with their wives, and have been treated in a similar manner.

It was about after a quarter of an hour's stay outside Messrs. Showemoff, Counterjumper, and Co.'s elegant establishment, that Mrs. O'Lavish's husband proposed to come away.

Mrs. O'Lavish declared her husband was very impatient.

"Cannot you," said she, "wait five minutes outside such a pretty shop without wishing to go?"

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish declared that he could wait five minutes with the greatest satisfaction; but that he had been waiting there nearly twenty minutes, and, therefore, began to wish to come away.

That they had been waiting twenty minutes there might have been disputed by Mrs. O'Lavish, had not her husband with certainty declared that he had timed it by his watch.

Had the noble firm of Showemoff, Counter-jumper, and Co. but known what Mrs. O'Lavish desired to purchase that morning, they might possibly have been chagrined at

her not patronising their establishment. But, happily for us all sometimes, we do not know everything.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish inwardly declared that he would not be kept waiting outside ladies' shops in this manner; so he made a proposition, which was, that each should go their own way.

This Mrs. O'Lavish agreed to, provided he supplied her with the cash that she wanted; so seven pounds having been extracted from his purse, they mutually parted.

What further took place that morning, seek in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.


I **KNOW** not how Mrs. O'Lavish enjoyed her peregrinations solus; but this I do know, her husband felt another man. Almost immediately on parting with his wife, he lighted up his cigar and was comfortable. No fear now of being nudged by the arm and requested to gaze on gay garments. He could do what he liked, go where he liked, look as he liked, and think as he liked, without any interruption whatever; and this he felt was a blessing, though perhaps a small one.

It is very true some ladies are especially troublesome to take into town. What with their long trains, and long stoppings, and

fondness of going their own way, husbands have a pretty time with them altogether.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish shortly went to a tailor, and satisfied both parties by obtaining two complete new and expensive suits. I do not know exactly what amount of cash they cost, but, judging from their quality, I imagine that ten guineas could scarcely have covered their expense.

Mr. O'Lavish was certainly a peculiar man; he was perpetually sparing at the spigot and pouring out at the bung-hole. At one time I have known him to extinguish a candle that he thought it was wasteful to burn, and to do many other such little acts indicating a saving soul; yet here he is at another time guilty of a downright extravagance. It might be remarked, perhaps, that the money is his own—yet I fail



to see that is a reason for such expenditure. Would it not be counted foolish for any mortal to give fourpence for a twopenny loaf?—yet truly he has just committed as foolish an act.

But no sermonising is my motto. I always like to leave those kind of orations to bishops, deans, and parsons, whose duty it is to deliver them.

Knowing how much business the two O'Lavishs did on the morning of their outing, I can truly state it would be tedious to jot it down in these pages. I cannot think that the ladies will be much chagrined at not having an opportunity given them of reading about our friends' experiences. Many, many of them doubtless know the delights and sorrows of shopping. Of being able to get the exact right sort of velvet to match certain

ribbon ; and then, again, not being able to obtain the precise tint of sky-blue satin they require to adorn some part of their garments.

With regard to my gentlemen readers, I hope I shall be immediately in their "good books" for delivering them from bothering accounts of domestic shoppers.

About three hours after the O'Lavishs had left their dwelling-house they returned to it once more, both of them richer in goods, but poorer in gold.

The O'Lavishs, when they returned, had the dissatisfaction of finding no dinner ready. It was, indeed, no fault of their devoted cook, Amelia, the fact being that in the hurry and excitement of her preparations to go shopping, Mrs. O'Lavish had entirely forgotten to give orders concerning so necessary a repast. Those

who are most imaginative can best depict in their mind's eye the troubled countenances of the dinnerless ones.

Mrs. O'Lavish nearly fainted away; this, perhaps, may have been owing somewhat to the exhausted condition she was in when she again reached her parlour. As for her husband, he might have, at that juncture, sat for his portrait as Giant Despair.

Happily for these twain, cold mutton and a tart were somewhere within the space of twenty yards. Mrs. O'Lavish was only punished with a potatoeless dinner, which I think none need feel grieved about, as it may serve to make her remember, next time she goes out, to order the viands for dinner.

The potatoeless repast of that day may certainly be said to have been a doleful affair.

As Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, in spite of his decidedly wasteful manner of expending his cash is, nevertheless, somewhat a favourite of mine, I wish to make the best of him to my readers. I will not, therefore, here relate the rather cross conversation that took place during their cold collation. But this I will inform the reader of, that their captivating tom cat—who was generally allowed to be placed beside his worthy mistress—made himself scarce, and retired under the table. That animal, I truly believe, did not affect cross company, being used to a genial atmosphere : hence I deem it was but wise of him at that juncture to seek to be by himself.

When Mr. O'Lavish felt sufficiently calm, he closely enquired into his wife's expenditure of a certain seven pounds mentioned not long

back. His devoted wife informed him plumply that she had spent every farthing, so that there was no hope of any golden returns for him, which remark, I observed, made his countenance one shade paler.

It did not give the enquirer much comfort when Mrs. O'Lavish informed him of the saucepans, fryingpan, and other kitchen utensils that she had purchased that morning. Let us hope, for the sake of Mrs. O'Lavish's ownself, that she did not forget the Spring-bonnet, gown, and boots, when performing her other purchases ; but I deem, as I know a few things of the ladies, those articles were not forgotten.

As Mr. O'Lavish privately informed me all about his purchases, I will succinctly state here that his effects alone came to the amount of

thirty pounds. This is going shopping, and no mistake! It must be very clear to the reader, as it is to the writer of these lines, that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish must draw in his horns somehow; if not, he will not be able to put many pounds by for a rainy day, as the saying is.

Every time I record the lavish expenditure of this worthy couple, I somewhat shrink at the idea of future consequences. It is true, the master of Mayfair House did not shoot, hunt, or play billiards—but what of that? Was he not, nevertheless, an extravagant man? Did he not save little with his left hand, and waste more with his right? Certainly, things might have been worse, but that is little consolation. What would you think of a doctor who congratulated you that you had

not rheumatic pain in both legs : have you not pain in one? and are you not tormented? But this strain is mournful; let us seek more cheery accounts in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE Mrs. O'Lavish, after breakfast the next morning, was rejoicing in her purchases yesterday of saucepans, fryingpans, and other kitchen utensils, she little dreamed she was to hear, a few hours later, of a terrible domestic tragedy. At that awful juncture she was very much engaged in perusing the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England. But, now, she could no longer with pleasure turn over its enchanting pages. The calamity that had befallen her was no less than this—that her “darling ducky,” as she termed it, had departed its natural life by accidentally tumbling out of the window.

The reader must here be informed that the deceased gifted bird had contracted a habit of walking upstairs after its mistress, often placing itself on the window-sill. Here it must have lost its equilibrium, in some way, and tumbled upon the cruel ground below.

Mrs. O'Lavish was perfectly horror-struck when she beheld the fearful spectacle ; and the thought vividly came across her mind that her late precious pet must have been killed by the cat. But, owing to certain evidence in favour of Master Tom, a verdict of "not guilty" might truthfully have been returned.

Directly Mr. Leonard O'Lavish heard it was dead, he suggested that it should be cooked for dinner ; which unfeeling proposition was at once totally rejected by his aggrieved wife.

The obsequies of the duck were performed by his loving mistress, two days afterwards, when she acted as chief mourner, clerk, sexton, grave-digger, and everything else besides.

Mrs. O'Lavish (I should hardly thus betray her) shed some tears on the morning of its burial. The inmates of Mayfair House were, therefore, one less. Master Tom evidently at times seemed to possess, as the renowned bard Tennyson hath it, "a quiet sense of something lost." He would often wander about the premises seeking his duck companion; but—like most other sensible creatures—he happily got over the shock, and was, ere long, quite himself again. In a few days Mrs. O'Lavish herself felt well enough to resume reading the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England, and once again she rejoiced

in her late purchases of saucepans, fryingpans, and other kitchen utensils.

As the late beloved duck had in its lifetime been a little known to fame, having not a few admirers, it was not to be wondered at that Mrs. O'Lavish was interrogated from time to time about the beloved bird. Its loving mistress thanked all for kind enquiries, and briefly informed them that it was not in existence—a piece of information that made many feel miserable.

I think every mortal must have heard enough and to spare about this web-footed biped, so I will talk now about human beings. When Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had satiated himself with staring for half-an-hour at his wonderful pet prints, he indulged himself with performing on the piano. It was lucky for non-hearers

that they had not the pleasure of experiencing his loud performances. The very limited tuition he had received in that direction at once prohibited him from being even an average player.

If there be any musical mortals that delight in one continuous row, then he should have sat beside the performer in question. It can well be imagined that to Mrs. O'Lavish these terrible thumpings were no great treat; but the most melancholy consideration is, that she must put up with them as long as she is the veritable wife of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish.

One day, as they sat at dinner, a brilliant idea came into Mrs. O'Lavish's head. Why should not her husband purchase another piano, and place it in the attic?—where he might perform all day, and all night, if he pleased,

without any annoyance to herself. Besides, another thing too, it was certainly true that they did require two pianos. Were not the times countless that she was deprived of the joy of performing herself while these thunderiferous entertainments of her husband were in full swing? Should she not at once suggest that another instrument be obtained? Yes, certainly; before she had arose from the holland-covered chair on which she was seated. It was during that charming course called dessert—which the O'Lavishs indulged in after every dinner—that Mrs. O'Lavish declared she would make a clean breast of it. So, before the bell sounded that day for Amelia, Mrs. O'Lavish had popped the question.

“And why, dear,” asked that worthy’s husband, in answer to his wife’s proposal, “do

you wish it to be placed in the attic particularly? Surely that is a queer region for such a noble instrument to be placed in?"

Mrs. O'Lavish inwardly said, "Well, either that, or the cellar"—a sentiment her husband opposite knew little about.

Mrs. O'Lavish could not help smiling a little, but she began immediately to inform her husband the true reason why she wished for what she had just proposed. When a little more cross-questioning, &c., had been indulged in, these two worthy folks arose from the table.

To avoid all further dull remarks about the pianoforte conference, I may as well inform the reader that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish promised his wife that he would think about it—a remark which totally satisfied that lady.

Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish immediately moved towards the fire-place, and performed that delightful task of scraping up cinders—a duty she considered always ought to be done; and one that her husband could assert she never neglected.

O worthy Mrs. O'Lavish, how proud thy dear husband should be of thee, for stooping to this act of domestic economy! What, what, would the coal-bill come to at Christmas if the scraper, that sceptre of saving, were never thus swayed? The coals would, of course, as usual, come to ashes, but the house of O'Lavish haply might come to ruin!

As this journal is, as before stated, thoroughly a domestic one, the good reader must not mind being informed of this fact that the O'Lavishs did not wash at home. The

consequence was, that every fortnight they had the felicity, if it were one, of frowning over, and afterwards settling, a thing entitled a washing-bill. It was, indeed, no fault of Amelia's, for she was a good washer, and a first-rate starcher. Then, it might be asked, why the linen-line did not Mrs. O'Lavish *have* washing done at home? Were there no tubs? or, were they not well off in water supplies? I can aver that these were not the reasons. There was only one, and that was, that the wasteful Mrs. O'Lavish liked her linen "put out," as it is termed.

But here I must say a word for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. He has striven many times to get his wife to submit to hold a laundry at home, but without success; Mrs. O'Lavish was inexorable, so, long ago, her husband had given up entreating her to do so.

CHAPTER V.

As week by week went by in Mayfair House, the inmates of that edifice became more settled. They were beginning to be noticed by the better class in the neighbourhood, which, after all, could not boast of many individuals of a very high station in life. Most of the houses round about them were occupied by retired tradesmen, and some of all professions yet in the bonds of business. A week or two back they had been honoured by a call from the Vicar of the parish, who, observing their respectable regularity at a certain sacred place, thought it was his duty to pay them a pastoral visit.

Mrs. O'Lavish especially felt gratified by this attention ; and held her head a little higher ever afterwards. Her husband cared little about the matter, and went on his own ways as usual, scheming, spending his money, and occasionally repenting. It caused Mrs. O'Lavish some trouble of mind to determine whether they ought to return the Vicar's call. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish thought they had better not ; while his wife's opinion was that they should. Then he imagined that after all they might, while Mrs. O'Lavish declared that they did not want to call. It was indeed a pity that these O'Lavishs did not possess a certain little work on "Etiquette;" they might then have dissolved all doubts on that matter. Perusing that volume would have been infinitely more useful to them than reading "the most beau-

tiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England." Let us hope, for their welfare merely, that this little work on "Etiquette," may be purchased one of these sweet June days.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish one day became acquainted with a certain gentleman whom he liked as a companion. If a fine name can throw any charm between friend and friend, the acquaintance of Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald must have done so. They first became acquainted at a certain restaurant in smoky Manchester, where both had hither repaired from dinner motives.

A description of this gentleman may perhaps be desired. He was a dark-looking man, with black hair, black beard, and black moustache, and everything handsome about him. Not

particularly tall, nor remarkably short, I should think he stood five-feet seven in his socks, certainly not more. Judging from outward appearances, he must have been well-to-do; though, perhaps, if we had asked him, he would have said he wished he were better-to-do, but this is mere supposition.

Certainly, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald knew how to make himself agreeable, if we may credit what Mr. Leonard O'Lavish related to his wife when he came home.

She seemed pleased that he had struck up an acquaintance at last. She felt that it was necessary, now that their worldly circumstances had improved, they should cultivate friends as much as possible. In their other wretched abode—described, I believe, some pages back,

they did not feel as if they could shine in society.

“Many people,” Mrs. O’Lavish declared, “did not care one pippin-pip to visit at small ill-appointed houses, with hardly ‘room to turn round in,’ as the saying is.”

But now, she thought, as they were in Mayfair House, and had plenty of oil lamps, and were well supplied with saucepans, frying-pans, and other kitchen utensils, that they were a little more able to do the grand.

As the amount of plate belonging to the occupants of Mayfair House was not extensive, it is to be hoped, for their reputation’s sake, their stock of such property was to be augmented; as I have solid reasons for believing, in the event of a middle-sized party being given, there would not be a silver spoon apiece.

The abode of Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald was closer to that of the O'Lavish family than they imagined. He lived scarce half a mile from Mayfair House in a domain of his own, entitled "Lovely Villa." As its name suggests, it was a charming habitation ; but, unfortunately, it was bounded on the north by a tan-yard.

It has been truly remarked by some being, that pleasant people very often live in unpleasant places ; and, inversely, unpleasant people in pleasant places. This truism cannot be gainsaid. Certainly, we have a case here before us once again proving its truth.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish rather repented having bought his lawn-mower a few months ago ; but it was to be had cheap, and that he thought was a good reason to buy it. I myself wondered

afterwards, that he could get such an implement, when I beheld the scarce quantity of grass the garden of Mayfair House was blest with. It was a lawn-mower, but, seemingly, he had no lawn to mow. Whether he intended to turn his blooming flower-beds into a grass-plot I of course know not. This is a favourite trick with some people, who are too lazy to cultivate those darlings of the earth. But did not both Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and his devoted wife, delight in their existence? Certainly; then, surely, no such intention was harboured in their breasts. I must here remark that I deem dame poverty will, ere long, teach the O'Lavishs some hard lessons over again; but we shall see.

When Mrs. Charlotte O'Lavish (for that was her Christian name, and I beg the ladies'

pardon for not informing them before)—I repeat, when Mrs. Charlotte O'Lavish had beguiled two afternoon hours away in scraping up the cinders, and putting what she might have called the room to rights, ordering her huzzies, as she called them, to their duties, &c., &c.; she toddled upstairs devoid of her duck, to dress for walking in the town. Mrs. O'Lavish, like a million other ladies, was always so very long dressing. I have heard of a certain gentleman, who, when he wanted to make his wife dress quickly, first ran away with the looking-glass. If Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had been up to this wrinkle, I sit convinced that he would have been saved many an hour's waiting. I know not for certain what it was that took Mrs. O'Lavish town-ways; but, judging from a brief conversation

in the morning, she must have gone out to purchase silver spoons. As she went alone, there was no fear that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish should meet her in the town gazing at gay garments. Amelia had been given orders to cleanse a certain apartment in her absence, but, as her forgetful mistress totally forgot to leave out house flannel, soap, and other commodities, she had only herself to upbraid on finding the task not performed when she returned. Amelia, therefore, would have had plenty of time, if she had liked, to peep into "the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England," but I need scarcely say she had no taste for that wonderful creation. A cookery-book, or "How I Kept My Place," would surely have been more amusing to the empty-headed domestic. But be this

as it may, she dispelled all *ennui* in gazing with her head-piece quite out of the window. Take a lesson here, ye thoughtless housewives, this is how ninety-nine maids out of a hundred behave themselves when you have given them nothing to do. The outing of Mrs. O'Lavish was not a long one. About six p.m., she returned, but, apparently, without one silver spoon. What has she been about then, this last hour or so? What account can she give of herself? As it now has become expedient that my plume be laid aside for a time, what Mrs. O'Lavish did in town must be divulged in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

Mrs. LEONARD O'LAIVISH duly enquired of his wife what she had been doing in town. It was as I imagined. She went on a silver spoon quest. Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish returned home first, with three brand-new silver tea spoons, half-an-hour afterwards. I could not at the time tell whether the tenant of Mayfair House was glad or disappointed at his wife's purchase; for he said nothing, and looked neither glad nor sad. Some better observer of the human countenance than I am, might have gathered the truth at once, but that opportunity will never occur again. The spoons were purchased at an expenditure of eight guineas—a

price too great, if we consider the present value of silver. Here, then, once again, was an act of thoughtless extravagance. Certainly, it is true, that plate is plate, and always will fetch almost what it is worth; but then, I ask, is that a reason for such reckless expenditure? Nothing had occurred at home during the absence of the mistress, save one little calamity; for Tom, the cat, had managed by some means to overturn a vase of flowers that stood upon the table. At least it was supposed the cat did it, as he was the only inmate when Mrs. O'Lavish entered the parlour. That was sufficient evidence for the female mind; but, surely, a masculine judge would not have been contented with such circumstantial evidence? The forlorn roses were carefully replaced in the vase, and supplied with fresh water; while the

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exquisite table-cloth underwent a regular "rubbing down," to use a stable expression. Master Tom was, doubtless, sufficiently punished by obtaining two pair of wet paws for his iniquity. Mrs. O'Lavish, when she had satisfied herself once again with scraping up the cinders, sat down to chat with her husband, who was at that moment reclining in a masculine posture in an easy-chair, placed by the fire-side. Mrs. O'Lavish declared "that she hoped her husband had been enjoying himself in her absence by playing on the piano, because," as she then intimated, "she would require that instrument the whole evening to try over some music she had been purchasing."

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, doubtless, as he heard this intimation, thought that it was all up with his performances that evening. It

may possibly be true that during that evening he innately sighed for an instrument in the attic—of which source of bliss he was as yet deprived.

“ Did you see any one you knew, in the town this afternoon ? ” enquired Mr. O’Lavish, leisurely swinging his leg, “ because,” he continued, “ let me hear all about your adventures if you have experienced any.”

The worthy questioner’s wife began to answer her husband in a thoughtless negative, but immediately corrected herself. The fact was she had seen a good many individuals she knew. These personages were no less than the Vicar of the parish, her respected butcher, Mr. Down, the upholsterer, and the delightful Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. This last-mentioned Christian worthy

had the happiness, shall I say? of doffing his *chapeau* to the mistress of Mayfair House.

It might be reasonably supposed that the first and last-mentioned of these superior beings were most agreeable for Mrs. O'Lavish to encounter. Who ever felt refreshed by meeting his upholsterer, or his butcher, especially one who was owed a considerable amount of cash? But, all know such circumstances must occur in real life.-

When Mrs. O'Lavish had chosen one dozen new songs of varying merits, the bowing music-seller volunteered to send the songs Mayfair House ways, which polite proposition was allowed to be carried out by the lady O'Lavish. The last-named personage was nearly inveigled into purchasing another piano, but she thought she would talk the

matter over with her husband ere this act of extravagance was committed. The lady in question said she would call again about it, whereupon the polite music-seller bowed her out of his premises, accompanied with a ready "good morning, marm."

I am at a loss to know whether the said polite music-seller had quite forgotten the time of day, since it was then nearly six o'clock. But, perhaps, it was his custom to call the morn noontide, and the noontide night. As for Mrs. O'Lavish, she afterwards merely muttered to herself "what is the man thinking about?" and thought no more about the matter.

Before Mrs. O'Lavish returned home, she went one more excursion, and that was a short one, and did not prove very expensive. She

toddled off to Mr. Timothy Cray, the crabman, and purchased one of those curiosities of the deep, for the alarming amount of sixpence. Mr. Timothy Cray strived with all his might to entice his well-known customer to take a pint of shrimps, but Mrs. O'Lavish, for once, bravely withstood his importunities, coming away with her sixpenny shellfish. Mr. Cray offered to send the crab to the Mayfair residence, but Mrs. O'Lavish boldly declared "she would take the affair with her."

Mrs. O'Lavish, we see, is not such a bad housewife, after all; she deemed it not unworthy of her to go crabbing in this manner, and I am proud to write these words concerning her. Bravo! Mrs. O'Lavish.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was delighted when his wife presented the crab on the breakfast table next morning; but his delight was of

a very transient nature ; for, on examining a certain cruet that should have contained that refreshing condiment entitled vinegar, it was found to be empty. What was Mr. Crab without Mrs. Vinegar? To be sure there was pepper, but it was like consuming salad with only salt, or partaking of filberts without sherry. The truth of the matter stood thus : Mrs. O'Lavish had thought of the vinegar that morning, and had tied a knot in her handkerchief, too, after the fashion of many forgetful females, that she might remember about it ; but, on going into the town, had entirely forgotten what that knot was made for. Perhaps, if she had tied another in that article not to forget what the first knot was made for, the necessary fluid would have been obtained.

When Mr. and Mrs. O'Lavish were getting

the better of their seven o'clock repast, the domestic, Amelia, handed them a certain epistle that came by the post. It was addressed to Mrs. O'Lavish in a handwriting she seemed to know.

"I wonder what this is about?" remarked that lady, as she continued to scrutinize the handwriting. "One thing I do hope," she continued, "and that is, it is not an invitation to go to a croquet party, or any other troublesome out-of-door entertainment."

I cannot state why Mrs. O'Lavish did not relish the above-named kind of *fête*, simply because I do not know. But I will say this, that the lady might have spared herself the trouble of imagining anything so annoying to her. The letter was only from some scheming individual who thought that he might

entice Mrs. O'Lavish into purchasing certain shares in some professed paying concern. The disgust with which the fair lady committed that informative epistle to the flames, can, I think, be better imagined than described.

“ I hope we shall not have much of this sort of nuisance,” said Mr. Leonard O'Lavish rather gloomily. “ How foolish these people are,” said he, “ they think, I suppose, that because one has a house on a hill, and little enough cash in the bank, that one can take interest in pecuniary investments.”

Mrs. O'Lavish thought that they made a great mistake, and the writer is of the identical opinion. As I trust those impatient ones that could not take the trouble to peruse these pages thus far, have long ago forgotten the existence of this work, so I continue to hope

that the patient portion of my readers will yet favour me with their attention, at all events, as far as the next chapter, wherein I hope yet further to disclose the lively experiences, hopes, happinesses, and actions of our interesting couple.

CHAPTER VII.

IF the amiable reader does not object, I am about to ask him to consider, between this chapter and the last, that some months have elapsed. In my thus doing he will have the satisfaction of not having to peruse certain domestic information which, otherwise, I should have felt bound to relate here. Indeed, very many small things, and also numerous vexations, that the occupants of Mayfair House have endured. During these months just mentioned, many, many things have been done.

Wonder not, gentle reader, when I state that the second much-wished-for piano was one day

purchased, and conducted to the attic, where Mr. Leonard O'Lavish has already had many an afternoon of pianoforte-thumping.

As I am generally candid in my opinions, I must here state that that worthy musician thumped as loud as ever—I fear to the annoyance, sometimes, of certain other attic occupants.

Mrs. O'Lavish, likewise, has had many a happy hour playing on the piano below, where—more often than not—she had opportunities of warbling to the four walls of her apartment. Sometimes, haply, to her enchanting tom cat.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, who had shown certain symptoms of dullness sometimes since the departure of his beloved duck, happily had been presented with two certain pets to comfort and

amuse him. These were two darling little dogs of Skye terrier breed, rejoicing in the names of Sniff and Snuff.

It was a mercy that master Snuff possessed a certain diminutive spot of white on the extremity of his tail, otherwise, no one would have known which was Sniff and which was Snuff. For they each of them barked alike, blinked alike, and growled alike. But they were good dogs, and rarely, if ever, showed their temper thus; though they were both given to barking whenever such intruders as rate-collectors, chimney-sweepers, and old bone and rag men made their appearance at the door. Therefore, everybody liked Sniff and Snuff, except the said rate-collector, chimney-sweepers and old bone and rag men.

This was no marvel; for who would like

two little Skye terrier animals rushing up to them and biting their garments ?

As Sniff and Snuff were regular ladies' dogs, there was amity immediately between them and Mrs. O'Lavish. They were, especially, pets of the cook, who liked them—so she stated—much better than the duck, now long deceased.

But then, be it known, that the cook's regard for these precious animals was exceedingly changeable ; for, whenever Sniff and Snuff strived to explore the interesting regions of the kitchen, they received, in plain terms, more cuffs from the cook than they relished.

I have just stated that Mrs. O'Lavish delighted in her new quadrupeds ; but whether their furry pet, entitled Tom, rejoiced at once in their company is a question needless to be asked.

The first reception of Sniff and Snuff was disagreeable, if not cold. The first thing master Tom did was to put up his furry back, after the manner of all cats, at such meetings, and to commence vigorously spitting and swearing.

I must here relate that Sniff and Snuff behaved themselves better than this ; they began to play with themselves, instead of molesting their new feline acquaintance. The warlike Tom, after a short time, toned down a little, and seated himself on the piano, carefully looking at his imagined enemies.

There is just one more piece of information I will supply the gentle reader with, and that is, that the little work on "Etiquette" has not yet been purchased.

Perhaps Mrs. O'Lavish has made up her

frugal mind not to venture buying that expensive work, in order to save her cash for other comforts.

I know not whether her library can boast of that wonderful and useful work entitled "Enquire Within," but all I can say is, that I advise her to obtain that volume instead of the other just mentioned.

"Etiquette" will not inform her how to be economical in her household expenses. "Enquire Within" may give her many a lesson in frugality, and, moreover, exhort her never to live beyond her income.

I begin rather to wonder whether I have occasioned the reader any anxiety in not informing him, lately, of anything concerning that great gentleman, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, a being, haply, more

interesting to some than warlike Tom, or my pets, Sniff and Snuff. Certainly, that gentleman is yet well and happy, and generous, too, for it was he who had given the two darling little dogs above-named to his respected friends.

Once again, for the sake of those beings who have still a craving to know about everything, I will state that Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald purchased Sniff and Snuff of a certain individual in Scotland. As that is rather a vague statement, I may as well be more explicit, and inform the public that they came from Glasgow.

Now, the reader knows as much as I do about this matter. Be it known that the names Sniff and Snuff were the total invention of the tenant of Lovely Villa.

Mrs. O'Lavish, therefore, at once felt constrained, on the grounds of gratitude and good-breeding, to keep to his nicknames; though I can imagine she would have liked to have changed them for two names a little more becoming drawing-room darlings. "But," thought she, "were not they given by a gentleman himself who could boast of three of the most euphonious Christian names in the world?"

I cannot, myself, divine what charm this had over the fact. One would have imagined that a man of taste, as the great Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald undoubtedly was, might have chosen for the dear dogs rather more aristocratic-sounding names than those of Sniff and Snuff.

But let us be philosophers. What did it matter? What's in a name, after all? Were

they not, in spite of everything, the two most charming little creatures that ever ran over mother earth?

But this dog-talk wearies some, doubtless; let me, therefore, dwell on other topics.

The delightful giver of Sniff and Snuff came to dine with the O'Lavishs a few days ago. It was not the first time he had sat at their table, nor was it to be the last.

Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald was delighted to hear Mrs. O'Lavish's tittle-tattle on nothing particular—it amused him. On the other hand, that gentleman amused her in a hundred different ways.

As before stated, he knew how to make himself agreeable to the ladies. That is a great and useful art, by no means possessed by every gentleman.

Yet there were two burning shames in the breast of this individual ; and he often thought of them as he sat at their table. He was only, he reflected, after all, a son of a draper, with no qualifications whatever. No delightful and respectable D.C.L. or F.R.C.S. could be written at the end of his high-sounding name. Only Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald ; simply that, and nothing more !

Exclusively, my readers all, do I here intimate, for the edification of the ignorant, that the capitals D.C.L. and F.R.C.S. respectively, do not signify Dealer in Cough Lozenges, or Fellow of the Royal Call and See'em Society.

Yet, should any sit in doubt regarding the truth of this statement, there are two alternatives for such ; first, either to believe what I state ; or, second, to refer to Dan Webster's famed Dictionary.

When the delights of a five-course dinner were at an end, and after Messrs. Port and Sherry had made many ambulations round the table, the august company arose from their seats, to do the polite in the drawing-room.

Mrs. O'Lavish charmed the company once again by warbling one of her dozen new songs, purchased the other day.

That treat had scarcely begun when master Sniff began a solo of his own, which sounded by no means enchanting. Snuff was not thus moved with "the concord of sweet sounds," but sat silent before the fire. Sniff was, therefore, obliged to be removed from the parlour until the music was over for the evening.


Snuff's delight, on the return of his boon companion, was complete. He expended full ten minutes of his valuable time in rollicking about the drawing-room, when they were bid

to lie down quiet together by Mrs. O'Lavish's footstool.

As the music was now over, Mrs. O'Lavish deemed there was a golden opportunity to seize the fire-scraper to cast up the cinders. I am proud to state that that lady was not the least ashamed of doing this homely duty in the presence of the great Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald.

I only wish the countless housewives of England would follow her good example; I say good example—was she not doing a noble, though homely, act—careful of not wasting the substance of her devoted husband?

Very true, very true. Yet was not her motto "Spare at the spigot, and pour out at the bung-hole?"—the old system of sparing with one hand, and spending with the other.



CHAPTER VIII.

IN this chapter, I propose to regale the reader with a refreshing account of the muddles at Mayfair House. Those, therefore, who will not relish this sort of information, must skip this chapter, and pass on to the ninth, wherein I hope they will find other details more to their taste.

That Mrs. O'Lavish must have been a thorough muddler and wasteful housewife, must be apparent enough, I think, after the perusal of the following facts.

In the first place, she would thoughtlessly order her hall to undergo a washing the day before the coals were expected, instead of after,

which gave the unfortunate cook the hardship of double trouble. Then she would get into her head to purchase fish only on Monday, instead of proper Friday. The consequence was, that her worthy husband was regaled more often with rather high soles and cod than in any other condition. Then she had a horrid habit of always ordering indoor floor-scrubbing to be done in damp weather, instead of when it was dry. The result was, that colds and dreadful throat affections were no rarities in the house of O'Lavish. Earnest entreaties from Mr. Leonard O'Lavish that that task might be done when it was fine, were totally unavailing.

"My dear, Leonard," she would say to him, "I must give Amelia something to do in the afternoon, when it is too wet to shake carpets

in the backyard. Besides," she would go on to assert, "washing floors is very healthy. There's no knowing what we might suffer if I did not insist upon keeping the house clean. You know how very often the Howards were made ill by fever, brought about, so the doctor said, by not keeping the house clean."

Much more followed here, all in favour of washing floors in wet weather. Another piece of domestic extravagance Mrs. O'Lavish was greatly addicted to was having her bed-curtains washed so often. As soon as three weeks had passed away, down came the dimity curtains to be handed over to the washerwoman, a snowy-white pair being placed in their stead. How Mrs. O'Lavish had contracted this wasteful habit is a perfect miracle to me, when I consider how she fared in former years. She

appeared to be as ignorant of domestic economy as I am of Arabic and the Hindoo dialect. Nor did her extravagance stop here. She always ordered the best possible scented soaps of a quality fit to be supplied for her Most Gracious Majesty's bedroom.

All these things added double to the amount of her household expenditure. Knowing these facts, I ask, what material saving was it Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish constantly scraping up cinders? I cannot here omit to mention a gross blunder of which the mistress of Mayfair House was once guilty.

It had become necessary one day that one of her rooms had to undergo whitewashing and re-papering. Can the reader credit the fact when I tell him that the thoughtless Mrs. O'Lavish had the walls re-papered first, and

the ceiling whitewashed afterwards? The consequence of this folly was that the new wall-paper became so splashed by the whitewashing process, that a new paper had to be provided afterwards.

This lesson was a good one, and, I am glad to relate, she ever afterwards recollected to have the whitewashing performed previous to the paperhanging. I do hope the gracious reader does not imagine that I have any particular spite against Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, and that I am glad thus to vent my spleen against her in making public her failings in housekeeping. On the contrary, I feel sorry that I am obliged, for the sake of making her a caution to young housewives, to mention the things I have done. But, be it known, I have still great consideration for her, though, I fear, she has little reason.

to love me for thus pointing out her muddles. Let us hope she will improve ; certainly, there is plenty of room for improvement.

It has now become my duty to speak of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's wastefulness. It would not be fair if I allowed his lavishments to pass by uncommented upon, when his poor wife has been just ignominiously shown up. So I must mention his domestic failings.

In the first place, the gentleman in question had a horrid habit of not wiping his feet ; the consequence was, that the stair-carpet and druggets in the sitting-rooms were often covered with the dust off his feet. Then, whenever he came in, he never took care to brush his beaver hat, and place it properly upon certain pegs, of which there was an abundant supply in the hall. He always carelessly

banged down that article upon the hall table; the consequence was, that it was not very long before the said hat showed symptoms of wear through such bad treatment.

When his wife procured him at night a certain green pair of carpet slippers, he never took the trouble to slip his feet into them. He never deigned to have his old suits cleaned and repaired. He wore them until they were shabby, but then immediately abandoned them to purchase new ones.

The same with his gloves, collars, and cravats. There was scarcely a fortnight went by without some one of such articles purchased. The gentleman often thought this inwardly: he was the master of Mayfair House, with an income of five hundred pounds a year, and it was right that he should cut a certain figure. I cannot help

thinking that he will have to "cut a certain figure" out of his abode ere many more fine summers have passed away, if he and his wife do not in some way curtail their expenditures. That there were many, many more such wasteful acts of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish is undoubtedly true; but why should I here state them when already the reader must be bored with those I have here brought to light? Besides, the weary writer himself feels anxious to bring this least-of-all agreeable chapters to a close; he also feels bored, and, therefore, will not extend the length of this chapter any more, but pass on to the next one without further delay.

CHAPTER IX.

WHEN Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was reclining in his chair one evening, engaged in the improving occupation of examining an unpaid water-rate, Amelia, that industrious domestic, came into the parlour and informed her master that a gentleman had called to speak to him. She was thereupon ordered to show the said gentleman into the dining-room to wait Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's pleasure.

As the unknown caller had been ushered into a room with an excellent fire, and, moreover, as the strange gentleman was enveloped in one of those comfortable coats called Ulsters, there need be no fear of the gentleman taking

cold. Certainly, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had taken a little pains to imagine who this visitor might be.

Perhaps, thought he, it was the parson of the parish, or the wonderful Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. Yet, surely, he meditated, they would not call at such an unfashionable hour as half-past six o'clock in the evening. He troubled his head no longer, but went down to see the stranger.

One may imagine his surprise when he found that the individual in question was no less a personage than his greengrocer. So quick is the glance of the mind, that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish imagined for an instant he might have called for orders—since he certainly had failed to call the two previous mornings. But when the great-coated greengrocer

withdrew from the depths of his left-hand pocket a certain white paper and presented it to him, that bubble of imagination had burst. The paper politely placed into Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's hand, was merely a bill against him, for potatoes, parsnips, celery, sprouts, onions, and various other vegetables. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish opened his eyes wide at the account, and then wider at the dunning greengrocer, wondering why he had come to thus trouble him at such a time of the day. It's true the bill was an old one, and also a long one, and a high one; but was that a reason that he should be thus troubled to face a money-grabbing greengrocer?

These golden thoughts, happily for the last-named being, were not clothed in silver speech. As Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was not particularly

flush of cash just then, he requested his dinner to leave his account, when he promised to settle it at his earliest convenience.

So the master of Mayfair House showed the great-coated individual his flight of steps, and returned once again to the parlour. For the consideration of those charming characters who like to know about everything, I will here inform them that the bill just put into Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's hand amounted to seven pounds, all but three-half-pence. What Mrs. O'Lavish will say when she sees the account, I know not.

Let us hope she will endeavour for the future to economise a little more, and consume only parsnips and potatoes.

When Mrs. O'Lavish next entered the parlour, she found her husband intent on ex-

aming the items of the greengrocer's account. Mrs. O'Lavish was utterly surprised at the amount, and wondered how on earth it came to so much money. She began to declare that she had not been at all extravagant in what she had ordered.

It must here be stated that it was Mrs. O'Lavish's creed that no dinner was wholesome without at least three sorts of vegetables. Here her extravagance is again unquestionable. Before she has done with dinners on mother earth, I fancy she will have to learn to partake of many meals with only one vegetable.

Mrs. O'Lavish began rather to chide her husband for not allowing her to settle the bill before. She did not like her importunate greengrocer coming in this way, demanding immediate payment.

“We shall have the milkwoman dunning us next,” declared she, throwing down the bill, pettishly.

Perhaps Mr. Leonard O’Lavish inwardly thought, yes, and the butcher, baker, boot-maker, and all our other tradesmen in the town.

When Mrs. O’Lavish had rather more vehemently than usual scraped up the cinders, of course much to the delight of her husband’s musical ears, she sat down on the sofa, and began reading. She had long ago finished perusing “the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England.” The work she was now engaged with can be said to be rather a formidable affair, since it consisted of no less than fifteen volumes. The title of it was, “A little Information about Everything,” As she had only just read half of the first

volume, all can imagine that she had a good deal of printed matter yet to master.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had at that time fallen asleep over a pamphlet he was reading, entitled, "Some Strictures on the Causes of Wakefulness at Night." As the gentleman just mentioned was certainly not lethargic, we may imagine that it was but a common cause that had made him thus sleep, namely, weariness.

When Mrs. O'Lavish had indulged herself with an hour's reading, she varied her occupation a little by trimming the lamps, and caressing her charming tom cat. That animal began purring like a good-natured quadruped, and felt gratified for the notice he was experiencing from his mistress. Sniff and Snuff, let it be known, were not in the room just then

to feel jealous of their feline companion. Those animals were gone nominally to bed, but that was only, after all, to an ancient hamper with an ample supply of straw placed therein—a region confessedly good enough for those sagacious animals.

Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish's husband, soon after these acts of his wife stated above, having suddenly given symptoms of snoring, was awoken by his wife, who suggested that he should go to bed. She humanely lighted his candle for him, and advocated his immediate departure, at the same time heroically offering to attend to the door, &c., and see all things were safe for the night.

It was half-an-hour hence before Mrs. O'Lavish followed her remarkable husband in the direction of bed. She did not peruse that

voluminous work, entitled, "A little Information about Everything." The fact is, she was somewhat too annoyed with the green-grocer's behaviour that evening to take further interest in the work that night. In no tedious length of time the fire was extinguished, the hearthrug folded up, the oil lamp turned out, and Mrs. O'Lavish in the land of dreams.

CHAPTER X.

I HAVE again a favour to crave of my readers. 'Tis this : I would ask them kindly to consider, about five years ago, the worthy O'Lavishs, of Mayfair House, were blest with the bringing into the world of two little twin sons to add to their earthly weal. They were two dear little fellows, and, as their devoted nurse declared, "were the two beautifullest little babes that ever cried in a cradle." It would tire the reader, were I to touch upon every story worth relating since their birth, and this small work would assume a dimension I have no intention it should, if everything were jotted down here ; therefore, it shall not be done. I believe there

are some inhuman creatures that regularly abominate babies. These, then, doubtless, I shall at once delight, when I make this statement—that I am not going to record certain histories that I know they will not relish; yet I must say one or two things about the little fellows, which I deem better be stated here.

Their parents were desirous of giving them two suitable names, and it took them many a day to determine what those two names should be. At one time they had almost settled to call them Joseph and Benjamin; but, somehow, they could not make up their minds. Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish rather wished to name them Christopher and Hubert, in remembrance of their devoted friend, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. But her husband thought that perhaps that gentleman would consider it

a liberty taken. As Mrs. O'Lavish decidedly did not wish to annoy him in any way, they were not called Christopher and Hubert. I myself think that it was a grievous pity that they had not "Enquire Within" to consult. Were there not a noble collection of Christian names to be found in that invaluable volume? What a pity they did not think of obtaining this work, instead of the far less useful one on "Etiquette." At one time they were quite excited about the subject.

"What do you say to John and Thomas, dear?" said Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. "Of William and Richard; Peter and Paul; Jacob and Simon; Matthew and Moses; George and Henry; or some finer names, such as Theophilus and Solomon; Maurice and Harold; Alexander and Augustus?"

Whether Mrs. O'Lavish was afraid she was going to be treated with the whole existing list of Christian names, I know not ; but, here she suddenly begged her husband to cease mentioning any more names, as those he had already named, she declared, were quite sufficient. It was a pity, I always think, that these good people had not the tasteful Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald with them, at this important crisis, to advise them upon choosing their infants some euphonious names.

As it happened, all they could do was to fix upon the not particularly pretty names of Timothy and James. Therefore, these two young gentlemen are to be respectively, Timothy O'Lavish and James O'Lavish for evermore. What's in a name? That question had best

be asked, I opine, of Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald !

These young gentlemen, as it may be supposed, in the flight of years became wild and mischievous—like most other boys. They were, both of them, sadly addicted to that dangerous pastime of hurling stones. As their respected father had sternly forbidden them, at their peril, to molest those charming little animals, Sniff and Snuff, the consequence was that the war-like Tom came in sometimes for a share of their missiles.

Tim and Jim, as they were laconically called, be it known, were initiated into the mysteries and difficulties of Latin grammar and Delectus, by their father, two years after they had mastered the alphabet, and a certain child's reading-book, at the pains of their

devoted mother. The young jackanapes, so that worthy declared, were no buds of genius. Master Tim would declare L was like Y, while Jim could not detect the difference between a U and a V. But, in spite of their stupidity, they muddled on somehow, till it became time to be dipped in lake Latin Grammar.

Their excellent parents were some years settling what each were to be. Mrs. O'Lavish was ambitious, and wanted them to become bishops; while her husband said they would make good soldiers. What was his reason for this statement, I truly cannot say; yet, perhaps, it was because he found them so obedient, and that they marched about so well with their drum he had given them.

Mrs. O'Lavish, certainly, had now plenty to occupy her attention. The domestics; her

husband; her own Tim and Jim; together with Sniff and Snuff, and war-like Tom. These took up most of her time in the day. What leisure had she now, she often reflected, to peruse that instructive work, entitled, "A little Information about Everything?" or that other engaging little book, "the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England?"

Now, she could be quiet scarcely an instant. It was either Jim came rushing into the room beating his drum; or Tim plaguing her with some inquisitive question; or Amelia came in with a long face, to announce some piece of mischief done by the said young gentlemen.

As Mr. Leonard O'Lavish did not stay at home so much as his worthy wife, he never fully knew the *gêne* of being perpetually interrupted at home.

To be sure, he occasionally had the trouble of going downstairs and settling duns. But what were these interruptions compared with those of his wife?

One night, when Jim and Tim had been safely deposited in bed, their parents held a midnight consultation about them.

"What shall we do about the boys?" enquired their father of his wife, then sitting beside him. "Something must be done, and I don't know what to do."

"The condition of fifty thousand fathers at this instant, I'll be bound," said his wife, promptly. "I wish the boys to be bishops," she went on to assert.

Here her husband smiled a fatherly smile, afterwards remarking "that he thought they would never rise to that distinction."

Perhaps their papa, owing to a certain dul-

ness they had manifested during his teachings, was rather diffident of his sons' abilities. Let me here remind that worthy that many dull boys before now have made admirable bishops.

Still, after all, that fact may not prove that Tim and Jim would make good ones.

Mrs. O'Lavish suggested to her husband, before they departed to bed, that her boys had better be sent to some school. They were now, as she averred, quite big boys enough to take care of themselves.

As Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's education was certainly limited, and did not extend to the knowledge of Gradus and Greek grammar, we may compliment his wife on her wisdom in wishing to send her little sons to some school.

There, it is true, they would not only have

the advantage of all the nonsense being knocked out of them, but the more substantial good of being put through certain books of Euclid, Virgil, Cicero, and other equally captivating subjects.

They could certainly never, never become bishops without going through some such process as this.

After about an hour's confabulation, Mr. O'Lavish arose, declaring to his wife—what some may recollect he did on a certain other occasion—"That he would think about it." They then both retired for the night.

CHAPTER XI.

THE Revd. Horatio Rowland, the respected Vicar mentioned a few chapters back, was now a constant visitor at Mayfair House.

The O'Lavishs liked him, not merely because he was a respectable person to be found at their residence, but on account of other excellent qualities he possessed, of which his white choker could not speak.

Every one liked him. Masters Tim and Jim were his especial pets; and both delighted to climb his knees and ask impertinent questions.

Even Sniff and Snuff manifested their bliss by the terrific waggings of their tails, and other

tokens of joy ; while Tom sat bolt upright, and purred amiably, looking him straight in the face.

The rev. gentleman was at first asked to a series of rather dull and stiff dinner-parties, till Mrs. O'Lavish thought fit to vary such entertainments with those rather more sociable festivities—eating teas, and smart suppers.

The Revd. Horatio Rowland, be it stated, was what one may call a clever parson. He was not one of those shallow-pated, lisping, *dilettante*, good-for-little individuals, who, week by week, preached weakly sermons, and mumbled and muttered and blundered over the service as if it were an office to be got over as soon as possible without decency or order.

Yet, of course, like most other mortals, he

had his faults. His chief one was preaching long extempore sermons, which made many of his parishioners rather shun his exhortations than seek to hear the lessons that he taught.

Yet, there was something uncommon about him, too, as most of the folks declared when they now and then heard some apt Latin quotation or a timely proverb fall from his lips.

“Better late than never, you know, Mrs. O’Lavish,” quoth this worthy, when he arrived rather late one evening.

“Certainly, certainly, Mr. Rowland,” said his hostess, welcoming him warmly. “I was fearful that we were not going to have the pleasure of your company.”

This little conversation took place in the hall, while Sniff and Snuff had come up to welcome their mistress’s guest, like two polite gentlemen.

When those two animals had made manifest their tokens of joy in the terrific waggings of their tails, they followed their mistress and the Revd. Horatio Rowland into the drawing-room.

“What charming little dogs, to be sure,” reflected the Vicar, on going into the parlour. “I have seen a good many in my time, but I never saw two I liked so well,” pondered he.

If Mrs. O’Lavish had heard these remarks she probably might have thought that this was only the Vicar’s politeness—in fact, a social fib.

But as they were only lodged in her agreeable guest’s breast, she was happily spared from thus wrongly thinking.

The Vicar, be it known, was not given to making agreeable remarks only to please his hearers. He was a more worthy character than this.

Yet, we might pause here and remark, that the Vicar was quite right in his cogitations. Were they not two of the most charming little dogs this side the universe? And was not every one struck with the beauty of these pets?

But, let us to the drawing-room.

When Mr. O'Lavish entered the drawing-room in about the space of half-an-hour afterwards, he greeted the Vicar with respect and kindness. He apologised to him for his absence, informing him it was but urgent business that had deprived him of his excellent company.

Let us hope, for his sake, that it was not going downstairs to settle abominable duns.

Hardly five minutes after the master of Mayfair House had entered the room, Amelia

knocked at the door asking to speak to her mistress.

On that worthy going out, she found that the greedy Masters Jim and Tim had regaled themselves with what they supposed to be jam; which, however, was nothing but a new supply of soft soap, which their thoughtful mamma had that morning ordered for some domestic purpose.

The faces of the young gentlemen may, perhaps, be imagined, but cannot be described.

Amelia declared "that it just served them well right," but their humane mamma made no such unkind speeches. She washed their mouths for them, and told them to spit out everything, which the young monkeys did, obediently and well.

They were afterwards treated to an ample dose of honey, which, I think, some austere readers will consider is more than they deserved.

When this little domestic drama was at an end, Mrs. O'Lavish returned to the drawing-room, striving to assume a countenance of perfect composure. Whether she was successful, must be asked of the Vicar, or the master of the Mayfair habitation.

Mrs. O'Lavish found her husband in confabulation with the Revd. Horatio Rowland, the important theme being on the wisdom of preaching short sermons.

Mrs. O'Lavish, who, unlike her husband, was well cognizant of the fact that her revd. guest was rather addicted to giving long discourses, felt anxious to change the dangerous

topic, fearing lest her husband might give vent to remarks not particularly complimentary. So she wedged in the question of whether the Vicar was going to give a school-feast this month? a query we can forgive Mrs. O'Lavish having asked, if we consider the motive of the questioner.

As the Revd. Horatio Rowland had a lively imagination, he might have thought that his excellent hostess had some rational reason for thus catechising him. He might have thought it was again her intention to send him, as on a former occasion, a selection of oranges, biscuits, buns, and other delectable articles.

Yet, reader, that thought was as far from that lady's mind as California is from Cambridge.

"What an admirable sermon you gave us

last Sunday!" declared Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, as he plumped himself down on the best easy-chair in the drawing-room. "You gave it to the ladies severely," he continued.

"I am obliged," said the revd. gentleman, seriously, "to show up the vanities of this wicked world sometimes, and to exhort my hearers to adorn their souls a little more, and their bodies a little less."

What Mrs. O'Lavish thought during this little conversation I cannot tell; but I imagine by her looks, she must have felt far from comfortable.

The Vicar went on to say that he generally preached but three kinds of sermons: one for men, one for women, and one for children.

Hereupon Mr. O'Lavish remarked, "then I suppose we men shall come in for an oration next Sunday?" But the Revd.

Horatio Rowland informed him promptly of the felicitous fact that next Sunday there was going to be a sermon preached by a stranger, with a collection afterwards, in aid of the restoration of their church; at which information Mr. O'Lavish mildly blinked. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and the respected Vicar, soon afterwards, might have been heard partaking in a mild colloquy about Mahomet. Whether Mrs. O'Lavish was utterly unable to join in the conversation, I know not; but this I do know, that that lady sat silent while the interesting discourse took place. Let us hope that the worthy Vicar's remarks about Mahomet were instructive, if not altogether entertaining to her. Before the two gentlemen had fully discussed the interesting theme above alluded to, Mrs. O'Lavish moved towards the

door, begging her revd. guest to excuse her absence one moment. As there was a certain entertainment to come off in the not very long space of time of half-an-hour, I have no existing doubt but that lady in question departed to prepare for a certain repast. When she next returns to the parlour, let us hope, for her sake, that her husband and guest will have changed their theme of conversation to one a little more interesting to her than that of Mahomet.

Sniff and Snuff behaved like good dogs, they sat down together by the side of their master, and heard what he and the revd. gentleman had to say about Mahomet ; but master Tom fell fast asleep, and therefore was totally ignorant of the interesting conversation then going on. Here this chapter must end ; still, O reader, accompany me to the next one.

CHAPTER XII.

Mrs. O'LAVISH felt relieved to find, when she returned to the drawing-room, that Mahomet was not the subject of conversation. The Revd. Horatio Rowland was, at that time, talking about church music—how that people that really possessed bad voices, and no ear for music, should not attempt to join in the singing until by some means they had learned to sing properly. This theme was an interesting one to both the O'Lavishs, as they were musical, and each took interest in musical subjects. But it was especially so to Mrs. O'Lavish, as she had a good voice, and sang admirably.

“ I quite agree with you, Mr. Rowland,” said

that last-mentioned lady, "and," continued she, "I think it would be a good thing if some notice were put in the pews, that those people who cannot sing properly are requested not to try."

The Vicar smiled at this idea; but I should fancy he must have thought it would not do to carry it into effect. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish imagined the best way would be to call on the parishioners, and inform them privately, a method I should think rather expensive of shoe leather and Christian temper. This rather flippant conversation did not last long. It was very evident that the three illustrious sharers in it had not thought very deeply about the subject. The Revd. Horatio Rowland began to caress Master Sniff, who had come up to him after the foregoing colloquy;

Snuff at that juncture was in the land of Nod—to use an expression of my dear grandmother. When Sniff had wagged his tail about forty dozen times, in seventy seconds, he returned from whence he came. Mrs. O'Lavish had just formed in her mind the noble conception of scraping up the cinders; but, happily, for the company present, it was postponed, as Amelia then came in to announce a cheering fact, namely, that supper was ready. Am I here to indulge the epicurean reader with what viands were supplied on that occasion? Am I to carefully go over each delicate dish that Mrs. O'Lavish had provided for her revd. guest? I say no, and Echo, faithful sprite, also answers no. Write to Mrs. O'Lavish, kind soul, and ask her ye epicures; she, no doubt, will tell you full particulars. When the

latter grace had been suitably uttered by the Revd. Horatio Rowland, the noble company arose to re-assemble in the drawing-room. Mrs. O'Lavish had once again time and opportunity to scrape up the cinders—an act she was not ashamed to do before a butcher or a bishop. As the revd. guest was known to be fond of music, Mrs. O'Lavish, uninvited, sat down to render one of her songs. I must here state the revd. gentleman present did not ask that inane query—"Pray, who is the song by?"

He merely made the gentlemanly remark, that it gave him great pleasure to hear it, which made Mrs. O'Lavish smile.

"Did you ever read "Jameson on the Book of Job?" enquired the Revd. Horatio Rowland of Mr. O'Lavish, after his wife's song was

ended, "it is an interesting work, and quite worth reading."

The gentleman thus questioned, replied "that he had not even heard of the book," which remark served only to make his guest open his eyes rather wider than usual. Mr. O'Lavish inwardly thought that he might as well have asked him whether he had ever read, "Hull on Blood to the Head," or "Smith on the Causes of Comets?" as he would sooner have read those works than the one he had just mentioned. Mrs. O'Lavish, seeing that her husband showed symptoms of being bored, volunteered to inform her guest that they had not much time to give to books. Ah! thought the Revd. Horatio Rowland, how much easier it was to display volumes upon the table than to peruse the insides of them. This was true

enough, and I think these worthy O'Lavishes were one of those kind of people who liked to disperse about their rooms smart, showy books, whose exteriors they were more familiar with than their interiors. And yet, perhaps, we might ask, was not Mrs. O'Lavish a reader? Had she not read, among scores of others, "the most beautiful poem of the age by the ugliest author in England?" and was she not, even at this very time, engaged in perusing a tedious work of many volumes, which bore that engaging title "A little Information about Everything?"

The Revd. Horatio Rowland during the conversation, which assumed a literary character, informed his host, that he was at that time engaged with a work himself to be called, "The Life of Potiphar." Mr. Leonard O'Lavish

wondered to himself what he had new to write about Potiphar, since that being had been defunct probably for more than three thousand years, and all that was ever known about Potiphar might be found in every Bible. He would have questioned him about this, only he was afraid that his wife would not relish hearing about Potiphar, any more than she did hearing about Mahomet. Mrs. O'Lavish rang the bell, and ordered Amelia to produce certain spirits. This she might have been spared the trouble, since the revd. gentleman, for whom alone, be it said, the liqueurs were prepared, promptly but politely declined to partake thereof. Fifteen minutes after this, the master of Mayfair House showed the worthy Vicar his flight of steps. As Jim and Tim were at that hour supposed to be lost in the land of dreams,

Mr. and Mrs. O'Lavish, after having commanded their domestics bed-ways, extinguished the lamps, and retired quietly upstairs. Reader, meanwhile, let you and me do likewise.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE agreeable Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald once again became a guest at the Mayfair habitation. He was, like every true friend, always the same. When he stood again in the hall there was quite a mob to meet him, but a respectable one, be it said, for it consisted of Mr. and Mrs. O'Lavish, Jim and Tim, and masters Sniff and Snuff, who did not fail to wag their tails at the usual celerity of about forty-dozen times in seventy seconds. Let me here inform the reader of an astute reason why he or she hath not lately been troubled with Mr. Dundonald's charming company. The gentleman in question has, for

the last three months, been staying at his aunt's in "Divine Devonshire," as some unknown mortal has been good enough to call that charming county of beloved England. I must confess that I begin to feel rather jealous of this good gentleman. He has set me wishing that I had an aunt in that region, where, for once, I could go, and, at all events, be free from certain piercing winds that we East Anglia folks are often obliged to put up with. I must resist relating here, what I know might be interesting to some readers, because I do not wish to make this work a book of travels, besides the numerous other things it unlawfully is. I say, unlawfully, because I have now called to recollection the title this work bears. Is it not, dear reader, "How they Mismanaged their House on £500 a Year?" Therefore, let us at

once forget "Divine Devonshire," and fancy ourselves with the O'Lavishs again at Mayfair House. When Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald had been introduced to about half-a-dozen new wall papers in various apartments, together with other recent improvements, he found himself once again with his usual friends in the drawing-room. Whether the salubrious air which that gentleman's lungs had lately been enjoying, had anything to do with it, I cannot assert; but it is certainly true he was in merry pin during the whole of that evening. He played the whole evening, sometimes on the piano, sometimes on words, and sometimes with his "little monkeys," a nickname, wondering reader, he entitled the interesting twins, Masters James and Timothy. It was once only that evening that the light

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conversation was rendered somewhat of a heavier character when Mr. O'Lavish and his guest held a certain discourse about photography in general. Mr. O'Lavish declared solemnly, that he would never have his photograph taken again. Doubtless the reader will think that he ought never again to wish to be taken if he should ever catch a glimpse of the inside of this gentleman's photographic album. I rather imagine that if he saw one, he would have the pleasure of viewing about five dozen different ones; many truly indifferent. It is really marvellous, gentle reader, in how many varying attitudes Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had determined to be taken. In fact, and to be short, he was taken in every conceivable posture; of course, I mean, with the exception of standing on his head, kneeling, and all such unheard-

of positions as these. In one he might be seen standing bolt upright staring at nothing particular ; in another, reclining in an ornate chair, crossing his legs. One represented him on his flight of steps he had so often shown the enchanting Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald (dear Christian, I so love to give his elegant name *in extenso* !) Then there were about a good round dozen taken with his dogs in various remarkable attitudes. Sometimes their eyes turned skyward ; sometimes they stared straight before them ; sometimes they appeared sleeping. One which his wife liked, so she told me, the best of all, was representing him going to his book-case, in the act of taking out a book, which, dear reader, his confidential wife informed me was that remarkable work, "the most beautiful

poem of the age by the ugliest author in England."

Then there were numerous cartes de visite of the Masters Tim and Jim, in various postures, which I cannot say did them justice.

Mrs. O'Lavish, I am happy to say, was from this extravagance quite free. Once only I descried her photograph. Her dear husband, she told me, had begged and begged of her to be taken again in the noble act of scraping up cinders, but she always declared she did not wish to spend one farthing more in photography, as she considered she had spent quite enough already.

Mr. O'Lavish informed his guest that he thought photography all very well for still life; but when it came to depicting "the human face divine," then, he thought, it generally failed.

It must be supposed that the master of Mayfair House had, after his vast experience in photography, come at last to this conclusion ; had he arrived at this at first, would he have troubled his photographers in the way he did ?

Whilst the foregoing entertaining confabulation concerning photography was going on, the Masters Tim and Jim were engaged in that lively game of cards called "Draw the well dry." The young monkeys had been duly indoctrinated in that mysterious game by their loving mamma. They both of them pursued their pastime, achieving fluctuating success. First, Jim had the best of it ; then Tim managed to gain ground ; then, again, he lost. It would have been impossible to state how long this had lasted, had not their dear mamma

impeded all further progress, by bidding them to go bedwards, which at once cast a gloom over their play.

Ah! Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, when I observed your young sons pursuing their game, I inwardly asked myself this question—Are you not, also, drawing the well dry? And your husband, too? And is not your game a dangerous one? You are not playing with cards, but with bank-notes; and if you go on playing in the way you have done lately, you will not win, but verily lose.

When the young gentlemen were gone, the interesting Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald declared “they were two dear little fellows,” ending up with the lively assertion “that he did not know which he liked best.”

Hereupon, Mr. O'Lavish volunteered to re-

mark that Master Timothy was the most troublesome, though they were both given to that sad and dangerous habit of hurling stones. If any one be desirous of ascertaining what was Master James' besetting sin, let him or her enquire of Mrs. O'Lavish's painstaking cook, any day, except Sundays, between the hours of six a.m. and bed.

While Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and his respected guest were giving each other their private opinions on hot cockles and toasted cheese, Mrs. O'Lavish began to play on the piano, and to sing that truly enchanting old song, "When other Lips."

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish went on to say "he would not care one old cribbage-peg if he never heard it again," which words, when Mrs. O'Lavish heard her husband say, she immedi-

ately imagined that he alluded to her song ; so she at once arose from the piano, and furiously scraped up the cinders.

Her husband was obliged to explain to her that it was quite a different subject he was talking upon. When he had intimated to her that it was that trashy opera, "The Rose of Castille," that he had said he would not care one old cribbage-peg if he never heard again, and not her lovely song of "When other Lips," the gallant Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald led his hostess back to the piano, when other songs were soon after heard, with unfeigned delight. After two or three more taking songs had been sung by Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, that lady returned to her seat by the fire-side.

Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald sagely remarked, "what a pity it was

that most young ladies delighted to sing common-place fashionable songs, instead of the old ones that were ten times more enchanting. It is a pity," he went on earnestly to remark, "that every one delights in fashionable and difficult warblings of such songs as 'Will he Come?' 'Ever the Same,' 'Truly Thine,' and other mock-sentimental creations. I feel confident that if silly girls would not buy and sing such trash, the authors of such wretched compositions would leave off composing them. It is the old story over again: they write them because there is a certain demand for those articles. It reminds one of a certain man, who, being asked why he went on hawking halfpenny Jew's harps, answered, because the public was foolish enough to buy them."

Mrs. O'Lavish entirely disagreed with Mr.

Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. She remarked it was a good thing that new songs were ever to be had. Some of them, she maintained, were quite as good as the old ones, and gave more pleasure to the audience, merely because they were new.

Her worthy guest did not further argue with Mrs. O'Lavish. Perhaps he thought that she eventually would have had the worst of the argument, and thus nobly spared her the humiliation of experiencing a defeat. Well done, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. You are wise in your generation ; you have also delivered yourself from no delightful affair, namely, an argument with a woman.

The charming sitting-down supper that followed soon after this conversation was

marred by a domestic blunder, founded on that miserable rock—forgetfulness.

Dear reader, the disagreeing Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish had arranged that that palatable dish called lobster-salad should be partaken of during that evening's repast.

But Mrs. O'Lavish had entirely forgotten to instruct the cook to boil a certain live lobster from his native hue—a kind of indigo—to that of a lively red.

Fancy her remorse on enquiring if the lobster were ready? to hear Amelia declare that “cook say she hain't 'ad no orders about the lobster.”

Mrs. O'Lavish sat petrified; but she had only herself to blame. Cook was as innocent of that sin of omission, as the present writer is of the crime of bigamy.

It was a mercy, after all, that things had happened as they did; for if the vinegar-cruet had been then visited, it would have been found barely half-full. So the lobster-salad was thus doubly damned.

I should like to ask one question of my favourite Mrs. O'Lavish. Dear housewife, think you not that you had better part with your rusty lawn-mower, and with the proceeds purchase a series of memorandum-books, so that these things may not occur so often?

Putting down things in black and white, I assure you, is much more effectual than having recourse to that dangerous plan of tying knots in one's handkerchief, and then forgetting what was thus to be remembered.

When the lobster-saladless repast was over, the august company arose to go drawing-room

ways. They were met, with manifest delight, by their majesties, Sniff and Snuff.

Mrs. O'Lavish was surprised to find them there, and straightway retired with her quadrupeds to administer what I can term a thorough blowing-up to a certain biped named Amelia, for allowing the dogs to be there in her absence.

When this enchanting domestic duty was performed, Sniff and Snuff, and the rated domestic, departed downstairs to enjoy the delights of kitchen company; while Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish returned to the parlour.

When the mistress of Mayfair House opened the door, she found her guest engaged in performing a piece on the piano of that nature that any one would have thought required the performer's whole attention and strength. To be candid, the noise he created was, for once,

more loud than welcome. Still he went on, now thundering down at the base, and now taking, as by storm, the higher notes of the piano. It was a regular thunder-and-lightning performance: and one of those regular do-and-be-done-for affairs that some musical geniuses love to compose.

Mrs. O'Lavish sat in her chair, patiently awaiting the finale; and it taxed her utmost powers of patience. When she thought that it was really coming to an end, the enthusiastic performer went off again in full force.

Mrs. O'Lavish here might have had an excellent opportunity of scraping up the cinders without any annoyance whatever to her company, since she could not have been heard. But Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish did not scrape up the cinders; unfortunately, at the time, there

were none to scrape up. So she sat in her chair, patiently awaiting the end.

At length the thunderiferous performance came to a conclusion, to the ineffable delight of the hearers. Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish felt constrained by inquisitiveness to query her guest this time as to who was the composer of the *wonderful* piece?—as she was obliged, in politeness, to call it. Imagine her surprise (and inward disgust, reader, if you please) when the pianoforte-pounder informed her it was composed by his humble self.

Mrs. O'Lavish merely replied with a “dear me, you don’t say so,” while Mr. O'Lavish confessed he could scarcely believe it. This questionable compliment was taken as an undoubted one by the composer, who retired to rest himself within his arm-chair.

When a few more minutes had gone by in making rapid remarks on various subjects, the musical genius, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, bethought himself that it was time to depart, and so bade his entertainers good-by, and plodded his way homewards.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN this chapter all must be satisfied in not hearing anything more concerning the agreeable Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Donald, nor of the O'Lavish's esteemed friend, the Revd. Horatio Rowland. Not that I have at this time nothing particular to say concerning these two inestimable individuals (because I could ever find something to tell about these good gentlemen), but because there is other information concerning the worthy O'Lavishs that must now find a place here.

What do you think, reader? The determined master of Mayfair House has had gas-pipes placed in his abode, to the great comfort

of his soul, and also to the expense of his purse. That the great firm of Dullight, Swindle and Co. (Limited) have also rejoiced in the addition of one client (a good, *i.e.*, wasteful one, too), we better, perhaps, imagine.

Mayfair House is certainly now getting inhabitable. It is plentifully stocked with sauce-pans, frying-pans, and other kitchen utensils; it is blest with gas; it can boast of two excellent pianos; it has four capital oil-lamps, ready for use; it has a good bath-apparatus, and five tubs; in fact, gracious reader, Mayfair House now contains all things to make ordinary mortals uncommonly cosy and comfortable.

Then, with regard to the O'Lavishs themselves, they have many animals, &c., to add to their earthly joys. They have Tim and Jim to break window-panes, and consume costly.

victuals; they have Tom the cat to capture mice, and caterwaul occasionally on their premises; they have Sniff and Snuff to pet, and bite improper intruders into their house; they have two domestics to oppress and keep in order; while they possess no inconsiderable collection of ancient and modern books to read unto themselves, and temporarily forget the vexations of this life, and the muddles rife in Mayfair House.

I must here inform the reader that Mrs. O'Lavish has been going in heavily, lately, for eating-teas, and snug little dinner entertainments. She has given no less than seven dinners, and ten eating-teas in the last six weeks.

It was after one of the former glorious entertainments, when all the company had departed,

that Mrs. O'Lavish propounded to her husband to keep a boy-in-buttons.

Mr. O'Lavish declared that he should never make up his mind to have a boy-in-buttons. They were such troublesome servants, and were more bother than their buttons were worth.

Mrs. O'Lavish at once doubted the truth of her husband's statement, since, she said, "he had never had any experience of one yet."

It is impossible to guess in what way Mr. O'Lavish had arrived at this fact concerning the said kind of domestic; but he went on willingly to state "they were always so clumsy; they knocked things about so much; they never knew how to clean windows properly; they spoilt their garments; their boots were always uncleared; and they ate more viands than they were worth."

Mrs. O'Lavish here interposed and said "she thought boys-in-buttons at least could not be charged with that fault."

Mr. O'Lavish was certain that they could ; but still, his wife denied the statement. Mr. O'Lavish went on to remind his wife that if she had a page he would be always tormenting the dogs and her charming cat ; for, he declared, "boys were the cruellest little brutes in creation."

When Mrs. O'Lavish considered that her own Sniff and Snuff, and precious Tom, might be in danger of being tormented, the boy-in-buttons desire had almost faded away. She ruminated on the sad fact of bringing into her domain another tormentor of her beloved pets. Were not, she asked herself inwardly, were not her boys, Tim and Jim, prone enough to tease them, that she should obtain a page to add to their miseries ?

She nodded her head, saying to herself, "I will have no boy-in-buttons."

Thus, gracious reader, it turned out Mayfair House, with its wonderful improvements, was destined to be boy-in-buttonless during the tenancy of its lavish occupants.

When I informed the patient peruser a minute ago of the O'Lavishs' dinner parties and eating-teas, he or she, as the case may be, must not suppose that the same cook served up the tasty courses. Dear, dear, no (poor Mrs. O'Lavish, I pity her, with her two boys, and two dogs, her laid-by oil-lamps, and her useless grass-mower); dear, dear, no; one cook departed, and then another, with remarkable celerity.

This was somewhat strange, since I know that Mrs. O'Lavish had, hitherto, been rather

noted and known for keeping her domestics. It seemed to be an epidemic she was, unfortunately, attacked with. The malady, unfortunately, spread to the housemaid department.

First Amelia went, to be succeeded by a saucy Susan; then a saucy Susan, to a liar named Sarah; then Sarah was followed by a downright huzzy, yclept Jemima; at last Jemima was given warning, while a sharp girl named Martha served in her stead.

So that, what with servant-troubles, dinner-troubles, household troubles, troubles with her pets, troubles with her boys, troubles by the post, and troubles on all sides, Mrs. O'Lavish's existence is now become, certainly, not enviable.

Since I have heard of the news, I have ever

felt thankful that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish did not procure certain guinea-pigs that were to be had cheap some few days since.

I am quite of the opinion of Mrs. O'Lavish that she does not require guinea-pigs. Why thus expend hard cash, when it is true the livestock in Mayfair House is already sufficiently extensive?

Besides, I might ask the pertinent question, did ever any one feel the happier for keeping those least lovely, and least likeable of all earthly pets? The present quill-driver would rather keep lizards or frogs than guinea-pigs; and he is glad to relate the O'Lavishs did not go in for the latter uninteresting animals.

When mentioning certain valuable effects a short time ago, I think I should have men-

tioned that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish purchased also an elegant chess-table, with accompanying chessmen.

This fact has become a source of wonderment to me, as I have since learnt that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish does not the least understand about chess ; and scarcely knows a pawn from any other piece.

His precious wife, too, is as ignorant of the game as her gifted consort. I am aware, too, that the expensive toy could not have been purchased for the exclusive use of their good friends, the Vicar and Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, since those worthies, to my knowledge, are totally ignorant of the intricacies of chess.

Wherefore, I ask again, this wilful waste ? Perhaps the thoughtful parent imagined that if

he placed these captivating toys before his acute offspring they would, from some innate genius, which, perchance, he imagined they possessed, suddenly become knowing in the art of that wooden warfare.

But why should I conjecture? Let it be put down at once as unalloyed waste on the part of their parent.

But now let me say a word about the girl Martha before I terminate this chapter. Some of the better-class of my readers may here possibly turn up their noses (if Dame Nature has not turned them up already from their cradles) at the idea of reading one page about the domestic Martha.

All I can say is, so they must turn up their noses; yet, I will hope that such will be but a mean minority of my readers.

Martha, certainly, was merely a working-maid, under the respectable roof of Mayfair House, in office, only a housemaid ; destined to wear a cap on her head, slipper-shoes on her feet, and a white apron tied round her waist.

Yes, reader, such is Martha now ; but what, think you, Martha is by birthright ? She is a daughter of an army officer, who shall be nameless here, brought to her present condition through circumstances that cannot be mentioned in these pages.

In her former years she had tasted the flavour of better company, and sat, day by day, at a refined table, her ears then unaccustomed to kitchen-conversation.

These statements may have already stirred some interest in Mrs. O'Lavish's present housemaid.

Some ladies, no doubt, are foolishly exclaiming—"Oh, how horrid for her to be a servant among ignorant servants; could she not have been found something better to do?" and many other kind and sympathising queries, peradventure, are welling up from their considerate bosoms.

And what would you like her to do, kind sympathisers? To become a lady-help? or a governess? or serve behind the counter? or anything else?

Between you and me, Martha is much better where she is. She is more useful than a lady-help; less worked than a governess; and far happier than if she stood twelve hours behind the handsomest counter in the airiest shop in this United Kingdom.

Let me tell you, Mrs. O'Lavish quite appre-

ciated Martha's position. She is treated well every sun that goes down, which is no little matter. She has good wages, and is lent books by her appreciative mistress. In fact, anxious ladies, Martha is no more to be pitied than the ploughmen of "Merrie England."

CHAPTER XV.

Mrs. O'LAVISH, one bright May morning, possessed a burning desire to do some gardening. It certainly was true that her husband's conversation that morning had truly run to seed; for he stated he wished so much to get some mignonnette and sow it in two wooden boxes, destined to be placed on their window-sill.

No one in the world, that I know of, hates mignonnette, therefore, it is scarcely worth my while to inform the reader that Mrs. O'Lavish certainly did not.

As for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, he was perfectly mad on mignonnette, and declared he

liked it better than violets, roses, pinks, carnations, and twenty other odourous flowers of the earth.

It never came into Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's headstrong head to go without anything that he especially delighted in; that thought was quite out of his book of philosophy. So he requested his wife to get some seeds, which were obtained accordingly at Messrs. Blight-rose, Blastbloom, and Co.'s noted seed establishment.

But all this information is by the way. The intended theme to be touched on in this chapter is certain information concerning the Masters Tim and Jim.

I have this mournful information to give the reader, namely—that these two young gentlemen have in no degree lost their innate taste

for hurling stones. Divers windows in the house of their father, and last, but not least, enchanting Tom have been in various ways affected by the missiles ejected from their hands.

One sad day these two young sons of Ducalion smashed three window-panes of varying dimensions, so the consequence was they had to undergo a certain terrible punishment, inflicted by their father, bread-and-water and bed quickly ensuing. On this sad occasion, I must state, there was much eye-water wasted, which I continue to hope will not often occur again. The loving Mrs. O'Lavish had prepared some delicious jam and bread to comfort them in their distress ; but stern papa, unkind sire as he was, strictly forbade his wife to interfere with his treatment ; so Tim and Jim

had poor diet that day. Were I an artist in any degree, I would strive to depict the shameful countenances of the O'Lavish's offspring next morning; but, as I am not in the slightest degree a draughtsman, the reader must have the felicity of imagining their visages in his lively mind's eye. Mamma strived hard to make them smile, but without avail.

But let us forget their woes, while I furnish less shameful information concerning these young gentlemen. It is now about two years ago since they were taught by their father from the enticing pages of Latin grammar and Valpy's renowned *Delectus*. They had been placed at a school, not at Rugby, or Westminster, but at a school which existed in the bosom of their native town.

I will not plague the reader with a fulsome

description of the school in question. It was like most ordinary commercial ones, full of busy boys in school hours, and deserted forms and desks when those hours had gone by. I do not, at the same time, wish to put the painstaking head-master's nose out-of-joint, by ignoring his name in these pages. He was a clergyman, as those in such schools mostly are. He had the felicity of being a D.D., and what is also a substantial good, of having this superior-sounding name—The Revd. Dr. John Dunderhead.

Mr. Samuel Smiteboy, M.A., was the second master (who, by-the-by, possessed a rare commodity of brains), by whom wild Jim and Tim were taught. When these young gentlemen first showed their fair forms among the rude babel of boys, they attracted as is usual in such times, much observation

from those around them. They were asked many questions that they considered exceedingly rude; whether they had brought their feeding-bottles with them? If their nursemaid was going home with them? and whether she was going to bring a perambulator for them? After these, and other such delightful questions had been put, with no idea of obtaining an answer, one boy came up behind master Tim, and hurled his books in the mud. This courageous feat was performed by a timely poke under Tim's arm. It was done in a twinkling of an eye. When the scattered treasures had been collected, Tim, who was not such a ninny as he looked, scampered after his enemy and punched his head, which act was applauded by certain standers-by, who had seen the whole of the entertaining drama.

When the first interview took place between

the Revd. Dr. John Dunderhead and Tim and Jim's aspiring father, I cannot tell whether the last-named worthy informed the august Dr., that he intended his sons to become Bishops, and therefore, wished their classical education to be particularly attended to. But if he did, I should have thought it more prudent for the young urchins' parent to have made especial entreaties with regard to their arithmetical tuition ; since I verily imagine that their headpieces were not destined to bear the honoured mitre. I think, dear reader, their excellent father might have known better, since it must have been long evident to him that their abilities would not raise them any higher in the world than common English clerks on sloping deal stools. Tim and Jim were the idlest young scamps in

the school. They showed peculiar aversion to the interesting pages of Cæsar, and found stories of "Jack Shepherd," surreptitiously perused in school hours, ten times more interesting than the wondrous deeds of mighty Cæsar. But one greater bugbear they had to contend with. Their hatred and horror of one Euclid was complete and eternal. In vain their painstaking mathematical master, Mr. Peter Perimeter, strived to expound to them the first proposition of Euclid. They were told to learn it by rote, but they could not do this, it was far beyond them. One unfortunate afternoon they were ordered up to the headmaster to undergo the pain and mortification of receiving a certain thing known as a "cussy," upon the palms of their hands. This interesting spectacle was duly appreciated by

an audience of about one hundred and fifty cruel schoolfellows, nor need it be questioned, I trow, whether the smote-ones deemed it fun ? Master Tim, be it known, rather dodged his hand, so the consequence was that the thorough-going Revd. Dr. John Dunderhead repeated the painful infliction upon master Tim's member more to his satisfaction. But I do not intend to narrate all the vexations and joys (if there were any) that Tim and Jim experienced during their days at school. Again I must remind myself that this little work is not a school story. Therefore, the reader, who may perchance affect such narratives, must be robbed of such a pleasure here. What should I and you say if we snatched up a book with the title "Wasps and their Ways," being desirous of knowing a little about those ill-

natured creatures, and when we had perused one or two pages, we were to find that the informing author had suddenly changed his theme, and began kindly to explain about “Bluebottles” instead?

Would not you begin to confound him, if you did not say anything worse? I believe so, therefore, I must beware lest I thus offend, and must keep to my subject as near as I can, going on to inform the good reader—“How they Mismanaged their House on £500 a Year.”

CHAPTER XVI.

I MUST now proceed to inform the reader of the wretched mismanagements and muddles that went on week by week in Mayfair House. They were by no means on the decrease. The old floor-scrubbings in damp-weather were still insisted in ; coal came, as usual, immediately after the said ablutions instead of before them, while white curtains were taken down to be made whiter in the wash-tub ; high wages were still given to undeserving huzzies, and kitchen beer seemed to be supplied as if it were of no greater value than rain-water.

About eighteen months, reader, have past away since I informed you about such things,

but expense upon expense has been incurred. We may suppose that some bushels of cinders have been also scraped up by the lady of the house, but how many shillings, I should like to know, have thus been saved? Were the truth known, they would be found to be not numerous. Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish's palate has become more epicurean. She used to be contented with mild malt liquor, but now she has contracted a liking for Miss Porter; the consequence is that the malt-liquor bill is considerably higher. The usual wasteful dinners were indulged in, when Mrs. O'Lavish's three-vegetable-creed was rarely not kept to. It was a pity, I always think, that these O'Lavishes did not affect the keeping of a pig, since the said animal might have led a life of continual feasting in devouring the leavings at Mayfair

House. But a pig is a piece of down-right economy ; therefore, of course, it would not have suited Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish. I cannot here spare the last named lady : her wasteful proclivities must be divulged in these pages ; it being necessary that I should make an example of her for the edification of hundreds of housewives.

Let then such wonder again at the following downright shameful acts. Would any one credit it, if told ? She has obtained ten shillings worth of mouse-traps, when, to my knowledge, there has never been one mouse or rat found on the premises ? Can any one imagine that she is ignorant of the fact that warlike Tom is totally sufficient to scare away all such troublesome house-inhabitants ? Surely, she is aware of this fact ? Then again I ask,

why the linen-line were the mouse-traps bought? Mrs. O'Lavish has also lately visited a certain crockery-shop. In it she had obtained various kitchen utensils. The crockery she bought was no more required than the aforesaid mouse-traps. Nor has Mrs. O'Lavish forgotten to add to her stock of enchanting music. The pile she now possesses has become formidable. Pretty polkas, waltzes, and schottisches, in fact, all kinds of music, may now be found in great variety at Mayfair House. As for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, he has also indulged himself in this way in no slight degree. He has obtained solos, sonatas, comic songs, &c., in no mean quantities. He has lately, so I hear, rather neglected the piano, being at the present time hot on another delightful instrument called the banjo. He

imagined he obtained the much desired musical toy exceedingly cheap, but I am quite at a loss to know why he thought it reasonable, when the delightful affair entailed an outlay of five guineas. Mrs. O'Lavish, on the morning of its arrival, felt inclined to scold her husband for getting such an instrument ; but I myself think she had best be quiet, as it little behoves her to complain of this extravagance, as only on the previous day she had been guilty of just as grievous an act of folly. Nor were obtaining music and the banjo the last wasteful acts of the lavish tenant of Mayfair House. It certainly might have been also in the interest of his brace of promising sons, as well as himself, that, soon afterwards, a good set of skittles were purchased and paid for. O, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. O, master of the Mayfair habita-

tion, or by whatever other title you may be most pleased to be hailed, why, I ask again, this wilful waste? In vain I peer about your premises to find space enough for you and your beloved offspring to join in the manly, nay, princely, pastime of skittles!

Perhaps I do not know his business so well as himself; he may, after all, have the internal intention to play skittles in a certain park that exists northwards of his abode. Yet, surely, do we not know Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's tastes by this time? Would he relish skittle-playing in a public park, though he had as many sons as Egyptus around him? No; decidedly not. Of course, he intends to play skittles in his cellar!

When Mrs. O'Lavish heard of this purchase, she banged down upon the parlour table "the

most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England," which at that juncture she happened to be re-reading, and declared it was down-right wasteful folly. She thereupon began a tirade upon the bad example it would be to Tim and Jim to indulge in this degrading pastime. She solemnly declared they would never, never become bishops if they learnt to play skittles. They would get into low company ; they would learn to swear and drink bad ale-house beer ; and all sorts of evils would certainly ensue through the medium of skittle-playing. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish sat appalled with the lively suggestions of his wife.

After a time, he mildly declared he only wished them to learn the game with him down his cellar, where they would be quite free from all the vices she had just mentioned. Mrs.

O'Lavish said nothing, but thought what next? Skittle-playing in a cellar was a pill she little liked to swallow.

We live in a strange world, we all know. We hear of cats depositing their kittens in the kennels of their noted enemies—dogs, and those so-called enemies turning friends, much regarding their furry acquaintances, and to-day we have heard of skittle-playing to be pursued down a cellar. Certainly, we have yet to hear of a mouse's nest in a cat's ear, and who knows, ere the world's abolishment, that such a strange tale may not reach our ears? Verily, 'tis a strange world.

Mrs. O'Lavish so much took to heart the skittle-teaching to be, that her loving husband felt constrained to promise her the very first thing after breakfast next morning he would

go to town and exchange the abhorred skittles for something else a little more respectable. Mrs. O'Lavish was overjoyed when she heard the precious promise uttered by her husband. She declared "she now felt quite another person," but who it was I cannot state, since that lady never divulged.

It gave Mr. Leonard O'Lavish no little trouble to consider what the skittles should be exchanged for. In his sleep that night, Mrs. Nightmare reminded him of a chest of drawers, but since Mayfair House could boast already of nearly nine of those articles, it is to be hoped that Sir Skittles did not leave the house for Madam Chest-of-drawers to enter. Mrs. O'Lavish suggested that a pair of bellows were much needed, while her husband imagined that a garden hose would be more useful.

But I must curtail the talking that nere ensued. I will, therefore, briefly state that neither bellows nor garden hose were obtained instead of the hated skittles. After much haggling with the shopman, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish became the owner of a certain verdant garden-seat ; let, therefore, Mrs. O'Lavish, poor soul ! rest upon it, and be thankful. I have not quite yet done denoting the wastefulnesses that went on at the house of O'Lavish. If they both of them ceased for one day in their perpetrations of waste, the next day would only be witness to many more being done. There was scarcely one domestic act that was not accompanied with squander. The boots of their gentle offspring (Tim and Jim) were never more than once mended, and, if the truth be told, it was only their father

who insisted on this piece of proper economy being done.

They never were commanded to put on slippers in the evening ; the consequence was, certain expensive stair carpets and showy druggets led a wearing life. It was utterly useless the superior girl, Martha, raising her domestic voice against the amount of dust and dirt she had daily to sweep away.

She was one day testily reminded by her mistress "that the carpets were not her property, and, therefore, it did not matter to her how much dust and dirt were scattered upon their surfaces."

Many must think with the present writer that Mrs. O'Lavish did neither wisely nor well to treat well-meaning Martha in the way she did. But let us be philosophers, even in small

matters. What does it matter to Martha? The rooms were swept daily; what did it trouble the sweeper whether she took down a whole dustpan full of dust, or half that valuable commodity? But, by all Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish's jam and jelly jars, this is exquisitely domestic! Let me shift this scene. .

Be it known, that those amiable animals, Sniff and Snuff, through their master's kind extravagance, fared sumptuously every day. He was convinced that greaves and dog-biscuits formed the most wholesome food for his pets; therefore, he indulged in this fancy at the expense of his heavily-taxed purse. The result was, that most of the bones, and other refuse, were surreptitiously got rid of to a certain individual, who made timely visits at the sacred hour of dinner, when copper coins were will-

ingly disposed of to the cook for the produce received.

It may be true that some unsuspicious house-owners may be totally unaware that these kinds of goings-on are indulged in by their indispensable cooks. If this be so, I cannot at least charge myself with being wholly unuseful to such readers, as I have now been the means of opening their eyes to this truth. For further details peruse the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII.

As I have certainly not troubled the reader with much information concerning the Revd. Horatio Rowland, I have now no symptoms of quaking in my boots through fear of having annoyed him with his company too often. If you had chanced to be standing near Mayfair House, on Rutty Road, last Tuesday evening, precisely at six, you would have had the delight of seeing the revd. gentleman proceed by the golden-gravel paths, and, shortly afterwards, mount a certain snowy-white flight of steps. Then, if you had been a patient person, and waited one minute longer, you would have seen a decent domestic open the door, and the

Revd. Horatio Rowland disappear from your view.

Yes, gentle reader, he has entered the Mayfair domain once more, and I have no doubt will not come forth from it until he has enjoyed a capital dinner. Whenever I hear that Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish intends to ask her pet Vicar (not Parson, dear reader; unfortunately, I do not relish the title, as it seems to me now, owing to certain associations, almost a derisive appellation). Well, whenever I hear that Mrs Leonard O'Lavish intends to ask her pet Vicar to dinner, I rejoice for the Vicar and the Vicar's host. Merely on account of this—that I know the revd. gentleman's company is delighted in by the O'Lavish family, and, contrariwise, that the O'Lavish family is equally appreciated by the good Vicar. Sniff

and Snuff must have been that evening exceedingly delighted to see, once again, their master's guest, because their tails were invisible to the naked eye for no inconsiderable space of time, namely, one minute and a half. When they had made an end of their greetings, the Revd. Horatio Rowland had an opportunity of entering the drawing-room to greet human beings. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish arose briskly from his seat lest he should be found too comfortably deposited, as usual, in the best easy-chair in the drawing-room. Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish was rather surprised to behold Martha usher in her guest. The fact was, when the revd. gentleman rang the door-bell, Mrs. O'Lavish was engaged in the economical act of scraping up the cinders, and thus her ears had failed to hear the expected ring.

It might have been more awkward for her, but, as it happened, Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish only had the mortification of greeting the Revd. Horatio Rowland with a white handkerchief tied round her neck.

Perhaps she may have lamented this little circumstance afterwards, when she had time to bewail such trivial vexations. If she was foolish enough to do so, all I can do is to advise her not to "vex her bosom" about such trifles.

As the Revd. Horatio Rowland reclined in a gentlemanly attitude in a chair on the right of Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, a dinner-boding knock at the door might have been clearly heard.

This was the domestic Martha, who enunciated in a clear voice, dinner was on the table.

Hereupon, an audible smack of the lips was undoubtedly accidentally given by the good-dinner-loving Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. The company proceeded downstairs. It consisted of the revd. guest, Mr. and Mrs. O'Lavish, and their promising young sons, Tim and Jim.

• Sniff and Snuff, meanwhile, had to bear the temporary hardship of waiting for certain delicious morsels they were that evening destined to enjoy.

It seems to me, as I now write, that I may have disappointed some of those charming characters that like to know everything, when I stated, perhaps somewhat unkindly, that I would not trouble them with details concerning the dishes furnished upon a certain previous supper occasion. Let me be more considerate this time, and make the noble sacrifice of stat-

ing what appeared upon the table at this dinner-party.

Should any being find the dishes too rich for him, let such pass over this page, or even close the book. As I have no wish to protract this subject by entering into minute details, I will merely regale the reader's mind with a list of the delectables.

There was ox-tail soup, breast of mutton, boiled chickens, and roast duck, with their proper bread-sauce and apple-sauce.

The vegetables, which the O'Lavishs always went in heavily for, consisted of mashed potatoes, Brussels sprouts, boiled celery, and a handsome salad.

The pudding and tart department were comprised of plum-pudding, with wine-sauce; apple-fritters, and jam tartlets.

Then there was Cheshire cheese, celery, and dried biffins, and here we have viands to please the greatest sinner and greatest saint in the wide, wide world.

Some gentleman may be desirous of knowing what wines were furnished upon this occasion.

They were excellent port and sherry, some superb Madeira, and very passable champagne. Wines, gentle reader, of a quality fit for the greatest man in England to sip. Now, O ye epicures, are ye satisfied? If not, why not? For I am.

As the Revd. Horatio Rowland was one of those delightful Christians who always make themselves agreeable wherever they go, it need not be doubted a moment that during this dinner he made any exception to that rule.

He was chatty, jovial, and exceedingly pleasant the whole of the important repast. Nor did he fail to continue so when once again he returned to the drawing-room. His host's Madeira wine was duly appreciated. When they sat over their dessert, sipping the precious fluid, the Revd. Horatio Rowland did not discourse about vestry-meetings, and other parish news; but totally different topics became the subjects of conversation, of course after they had terminated all vinous discussions.

About three-quarters of an hour's talk took place during that pleasing portion of a dinner entertainment entitled dessert. The general conversation was of a light character, which was certainly more suitable to the young minds of the O'Lavishs' offspring.

The good Vicar made himself agreeable to

the Masters Tim and Jim. They rallied round him with acute satisfaction as he made fun of them as he sat cracking his filberts.

Master Tim's felicity, be it said, was somewhat damped when the Revd. Horatio Rowland questioned him as to what was Latin for nut. As that young gentleman's Latinity was indeed limited, I need scarcely say, the question was too much for him.

Jim's nut-shell knowledge served him better for this turn than his brother's. He answered the question satisfactorily, and was praised for his promptness.

When the Revd. Horatio Rowland had chatted for half-an-hour or so longer, partly in the dining-room, and partly in the drawing-room, he arose at last to leave Mayfair House, and wended his way homewards.

And who knows, gentle reader, whether such thoughts as these were not harboured in his breast, as he left their gravel paths? “Wasteful Christians, those O’Lavishs; I wonder how long they’ll keep in Mayfair House?” Words of weight these may be. But let us see what will happen.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had perfectly satisfied his inner man by supplying him one morning at breakfast with three delicate mutton kidneys, together with other eatables, he wiped his mouth with a napkin, mumbled a few words afterwards, which, were any one to have asked him, he would have said were intended for a grace, and rose to stare out of the window.

It was no unsightly prospect then commanded by his eye ; though, if the truth is to be told here, there were half-a-dozen combative sparrows squabbling for a large crumb of bread which one of those feathered creatures had found hard by.

Men are just like those sparrows, pondered Mr. Leonard O'Lavish; they fight and squabble about things of this world like them, yet in a more horrible way. Birds go to work with their beaks, and indulge in angry chirps; but men fight with killing swords, and deadly guns; and shed life's blood, and sacrifice living souls but for greed's gains.

But the sparrows have ended their disagreements, and may now be seen hopping together, looking about for other booty.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish has done contemplating concerning the sparrow fracas. He is now mildly surveying his lawnless garden, and observing certain primulas, now in their prime.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's nasal prominence is somewhat hardly knocked against the window-pane, owing to a startle through the domestic

Martha knocking at the parlour door rather louder than usual. When a fulsome "come in" had been uttered from her master's throat, he was informed that Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald had come to speak to him.

It was rarely that that gentleman came to Mayfair House in the morning; what, therefore, could he have come for? immediately became the question in Mr. O'Lavish's mind. Perhaps he has something important to say; perhaps he is going to leave the town suddenly; perhaps he is going to Italy for a change; perhaps he is going to America.

All these "perhapses" were momentarily imagined by the suggestive Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. Let him conjecture no more, but depart at once to speak to his friend.

From the sad moment that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish knocked his nasal prominence against the parlour window, to the moment of greeting his old friend, was no great interval of time, all can imagine, when I inform them ninety seconds did not exceed it.

I make this statement lest any one should be wrongly thinking the gentleman was kept long waiting.

Let no one fear the pleasant Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald is going to leave the town; or is off to Italy; or is departing to America. All these "perhapses" of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish were mere chimeras; since the condescending gentleman has only sacrificed some little of his shoe-leather and time to inform his friend of a certain auction to be held at a certain house, of a certain

friend of his, living in a certain locality, known as Watercart Row.

Some, no doubt, can look upon this act as a kind one; but I am of opinion it would have been far kinder of Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald if, that morning, he had not mounted the flight of steps of the Mayfair habitation.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, on hearing about the auction from his considerate friend, thanked him from the bottom of his heart for thus troubling himself. The fact was, that he had been looking about for many months for a set of busts to disperse about his abode. At the house where this auction was to take place, he had heard there were a great many excellent ones to be seen.

Three were of especial interest to him—

namely, the casts of the poets Byron and Wordsworth and of Daniel De Foe. When I think at all about this Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, I feel almost inclined to exclaim, and for the welfare of the Mayfair House occupants, "Defend them from their friends."

Here they are about to be drawn to an auction, of the existence of which, if it had not been for their bosom-friend, they would have been as ignorant as unborn babes.

Let us hope that both the O'Lavishes, since their last auction-visit, have grown, if not "sadder," very, very much "wiser." I truly trust that no more lawn-mowers, or oil-lamps, or saucepans, frying-pans, and other kitchen utensils will be bought while the tenants of Mayfair House there exist.

“How extremely kind of Mr. Dundonald to trouble himself to come and tell us about the auction,” declared Mrs. O’Lavish, when her husband informed her of his friend’s mission.

“He is indeed considerate. I would not have missed going to that auction for a good deal,” remarked her husband, cheerfully.

“I am very glad it is not this week,” said his wife; “for now we shall have plenty of time to look at the catalogue, and see if there be any more things we should like to obtain.”

“It would be very nice to have another garden-seat to match the one we now have,” Mrs. O’Lavish went on to say, carefully scanning her husband’s countenance to see how he took the idea.

But that worthy at once declared “he would

rather spend the money in something else." As he did not say what, all must wait till the gentleman in question has more fully explained himself.

Mrs. O'Lavish was interrupted in making any further suggestions of what it would be "very nice to have." It was to attend to a certain small dun of some twelve shillings, due for certain vegetables consumed a few weeks gone by.

Mrs. O'Lavish was annoyed by this little reminder; but she bore it with Christian fortitude. She blustered out of the parlour like a hurricane, ran upstairs, and soon afterwards furnished the importunate vegetable-vendor with twelve shillings; when Martha showed him out at the hall-door.

"How very anxious Mr. Turniptop is to re-

ceive his money," said Mrs. O'Lavish to her husband, then deposited in his arm-chair.

"Yes, my dear, he is," remarked that worthy, and he said no more. If Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish had not possessed many scruples in her mind lest she should annoy her amiable husband, she certainly would have informed him of another dun from Mr. Truefit, the tailor, that had come that very morning. Dare I say happily for him? he still continued in a fool's paradise, as regards money applications from his tailor.

Dear Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, she is so thoughtful and so considerate, and so careful lest her dear husband should be annoyed in any way before he goes to the auction next week. She had not the heart (as the ladies say) to tell him this financial fact, namely,

that Mr. Alexander Truefit, the tailor, had sent in his bill, with an annoying note, requesting speedy payment of his account. To be candid I see little philosophy in her hiding this fact from her husband. He should be told of this, lest, in his ignorance of the fact, he run into deeper debt. And now, O merciful wives of doubly-dunned husbands, if ever you are in the same predicament as this my Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish, never you keep back from your husbands what unflavourly news there is to tell of this kind, lest more fatal consequences, that you may not wot of, hereafter accrue. I will here inform those charming individuals who like to know about everything, that Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish mentioned to her husband about the tailor's dun that night, when they were both comfortably deposited in their tester-

bed. Let us hope her husband did not dream that he then and there had settled his account, and woke up the next morning to find that charming dream untrue. Those who desire to hear something more concerning Tim and Jim, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, Sniff and Snuff, warlike Tom, and other Christians and creatures, must peruse my nineteenth and following chapters.

CHAPTER XIX.

HAVING but one moment ago declared that those who desired to hear something more concerning Tim and Jim, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald, Sniff and Snuff, warlike Tom, and other Christians and creatures, must peruse my nineteenth and following chapters, I cannot allow myself to pass by all these remarkable personages and pets, without just saying a few words about each. But it behoves me now at least not to be verbose and long-winded. My space is becoming smaller and smaller, and I must make the best use of it I can. Mr. Samuel Smiteboy, the painstaking, and often pain giving, second master of Tim and Jim's celebrated school, continued daily to

indoctrinate the young gentlemen in various subjects. They were not very promising pupils, yet, somehow, they muddled on from half-year to half-year with a small increase of what, I suppose, ought to be termed classical knowledge. The idle rhyming Tim, one fatal afternoon, composed a scholarly doggerel in one of his dog's-eared lesson books. Unfortunately, for him, this caught the eye of the vigilant Mr. Samuel Smiteboy, who, though he managed to conceal a half-smile, wrote certain words on an unfortunate paper, and bade his idle poetical pupil to go up, book-in-hand, to the august Revd. Dr. John Dunderhead, when that worthy had the felicity of perusing the following expressive doggerel—

“ Cæsar I hate : tis confoundedly hard ;
And Phædrus and French I abhor ;
Euclid is verily very dry stuff,
I'll be shot if I'll learn any more ! ”

When the Revd. Dr. John Dunderhead had read the touching rhyme, he straightway seized his cane, and belaboured his scholar's back, till his yells were heard, I should imagine, for some distance beyond the school precincts. Afterwards he had the felicity of being commanded to write out five hundred lines, which, so he told certain comrades, he cared much more for than the chastizing he had just received. None need believe this statement if such do not choose.

When Tim's devoted parents heard about this grievous affair, it at once decided them to withdraw their sons from the school next half. They had been about three years at it, had learnt enough about Cæsar, and been taught how to cast up accounts. As they were soon to become acquainted with the mysteries of

ledger work, seated on sloping deal stools, instead of becoming bishops, their far-seeing father deemed it unnecessary for them to muddle their heads any longer about classic authors. And thus it was, just as they were about to become acquainted with an interesting being called Ovid, they were deprived of that joy by a withdrawal from the school. The Masters Tim and Jim did not bewail at all leaving their palace of learning, though they little knew, as yet, about the dull routine of office work. They inwardly blest their stars that it was all up with proving troublesome propositions of Euclid, and blundering over abstruse Latin sentences from the lovable pages of Phædrus. As, doubtless, I shall not allude much more to these young gentlemen in this little work, I may as well here state that about

four months after their departure from school, their father had the happiness of going up to London with them one spring morn, to leave them at an office, wherein they were to learn how to become sharp ledger men, and to busy their brains about percentages, discounts, and other interesting matters in mercantile life. Tim and Jim were fortunate in these facts—that they had the advantages of working and lodging together, instead of being thrown alone into the harsh, rude world.

This was an innate solace to their mother. 'Tis true she would have most liked them to become bishops, but as fate was against that, the next comfortable thing for her to think of was, that they were not debarred from the blessings of brotherly companionship. I must here state, in consideration of humane perusers,

more than those beings who like merely to know about everything, that the office hours of Tim and Jim were, certainly, not immoderately long; since they began at 10 a.m. and concluded at 4 p.m. This was no doubt a boon to them, as well as their loving mother, who would not for the world have had her promising offspring kept to dull ledger duties twelve hours out of the twenty-four. When the delightful hour of leaving off office work had arrived, Tim and Jim lost no time in repairing homewards; this was, gentle reader, to a maternal uncle of theirs, who had agreed to board and lodge the little London gentlemen on terms, I have no doubt, that were merciful. I cannot here go into any account of the said uncle, because, knowing that he was a very pleasant man, one or two statements about him

would certainly not suffice inquisitive personages. But this I cannot refrain from stating, that Tim and Jim are two lucky young dogs to have the opportunity of taking meals, and living with the gentlemanly and entertaining Hezekiah Howell. I must now, for one moment, say a word about one worthy, who I hope is not altogether forgotten, namely, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. This excellent Christian has been several times lately to the Mayfair habitation, and many consultations have been held with him, and much advice given by him concerning promising Tim and Jim. Nor is this all that has been done : Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and his devoted wife have been gratified by his company ; Tom has also been made supremely satisfied by his presence ; while the tails of

Sniff and Snuff have been rendered not seldom invisible through joy in again meeting him. Be it known, that the last time the above-mentioned gentleman trod the Mayfair House garden walks, he brought under his arm a certain parcel, enveloped in white paper. What was it, think you, gentle reader? It was that wonderful and inclusive work entitled "Enquire Within." The gentleman who carried it was going for a few weeks into the Lake district for his summer tour, and, before he went he thought he would make some little present to his friends at Mayfair House. I myself think it was most kind of him, but, somehow, I could not help desiring, for the sake of the O'Lavishs, that they had been acquainted with its pages ere this.

Philosophers declare "Better late than never,"

but what would they have said in this instance, I wonder ? However, this “ Enquire Within,” that they now possess, may be useful to them by informing them what best to do in seeking a smaller house, and how to pack up respectably and economically, and depart to other quarters. Mrs. O’Lavish, one morning, on viewing the excellent selection of Christian names in the wonderful volume, felt slightly chagrined in not having been able to revert to these seventeen summers ago, when her limited brains were much troubled in choosing names for her remarkable twins. I think all can imagine some more euphonious names would have been chosen than those of Tim and Jim.

Mrs. O’Lavish rather mournfully declared to her husband one morning at breakfast, that Jedediah Zedekiah Jeremiah O’Lavish would

have made such a fine name for Tim ; while Solomon Samson Simon O'Lavish would have suited Jim admirably. But the mournful theme was happily changed into an animated conversation about pickled cabbages and Normandy pippins, which last delightful conserve Mr. Leonard O'Lavish never before even dreamt about till he had read the pages of "Enquire Within."

I must here observe that it would be better for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish to read certain hints of "How to take care of one's Hat" and other wise and economical information, instead of perusing methods of pickling cabbages and preparing Normandy pippins.

Shortly after Mr. and Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish's colloquy concerning pickled cabbages and Normandy pippins, Martha was

commanded by her remarkable mistress to undertake the forty-fifth sweeping of Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish's bedroom. The opportunity arose, owing to the fact that her mistress was going into the town to make various purchases.

The obedient domestic complied at once with a respectful "Yes, mam," at the same time asking whether she should scrub the stairs as well? A negative being couched in the words "No, not to-day," Martha departed kitchen-ways, while her mistress went upstairs to array herself in her outdoor vestments.

CHAPTER XX.

THE charming pets, Sniff and Snuff, had the felicity of accompanying their mistress into the town. These amiable animals continued to live joyous lives, and seemed little to miss the delightful company of the clerkly James and Timothy. For they both continued to blink alike and bark alike, while their tails continued to be often invisible through terrific waggings.

Mrs. O'Lavish had several commissions to perform in the town. In a certain bag she took with her, gentle reader, was deposited the fifteenth volume of "A little Information about Everything." All can congratulate her, at all events, on having mastered half of the

wonderful work, when they know that it consisted of no less than thirty close-printed volumes.

Bravo! Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish; I much admire your perseverance in perusing so voluminous a work. Go on in this steady way until the last page of the last chapter of the last volume has been mastered. Read well, and mark well; then, I prophesy, your general stock of knowledge will have amazingly increased. But all this is by the way.

Mrs. O'Lavish went out also to purchase a mustard pot, some split peas, another tub, a door mat, and a few lettuces. All these articles were obtained that morning. They amounted to nearly thirty shillings.

When the worthy shopper had finished expending cash, she spent some minutes in

surveying certain articles always attractive to females. An empty purse was the only thing that kept her feet from entering that place. And I imagine it was better for her on the whole that only twopence-halfpenny could then be found in her purse ; otherwise, I think, a certain charming spring bonnet would have been sent to Mayfair House that morning.

As Sniff and Snuff seemed rather fatigued with their peregrinations, Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish determined to obtain some refreshment for her delightful quadrupeds. The formidable amount of twopence was thereupon laid out on a bun apiece for them, at a certain cleanly baker's shop ; so there need be no fear, henceforth, of those amiable animals fainting through fasting before they once more reach their delightful home.

The baker-man openly declared "*he* never see'd such nice little dorgs," at which voluntary remark Mrs. O'Lavish seemed very conspicuously pleased.

When Sniff and Snuff had demolished their buns, their mistress bade the baker good morning, which words were speedily uttered by the shopman, though he augmented them with a respectful "marm" at the end.

Mrs. O'Lavish, on returning to Mayfair House, found that her mustard pot, split peas, tub, door mat and lettuces had duly arrived. When she surveyed all these effects in her hall, she could not help declaring how promptly her Manchester tradesmen did things.

When Mrs. O'Lavish repaired upstairs, she restored a certain decaying fire, and vigourously scraped up the cinders. On her entering her

bedroom, she had the gratification of descrying the diligent Martha, on her marrow-bones, in the act of replacing the carpet. This was the finishing stroke ; her mistress, therefore, was not to be kept very long downstairs.

“By Jupiter !” exclaimed Mr. Leonard O’Lavish, when he returned home from his morning stroll, and viewed the effects just purchased by his wife deposited in the hall. “Here’s a pretty array of household effects, and, mercy me ! a tub into the bargain.”

These pleasant words were said in a gentle undertone ; so there need be no fear that Martha, downstairs, had the pleasure of hearing these ejaculations.

Mrs. O’Lavish at that moment had just mounted the last stair, so that her husband’s words were not lost to the aforesaid Christian

lady. The bundle of lettuces must have been comforting to the sight and soul of the master of Mayfair House, as he was extremely partial to that kind of vegetable. But as for the tub and door mat, they were more a source of annoyance to him than otherwise.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish asked his wife, when she came downstairs, "whether she had purchased the tub for Sniff and Snuff to be scrubbed in?"

Mrs. O'Lavish blandly declared "it was not obtained for that purpose." She only bought it because it was to be had so cheap—a reason that lady always imagined to be sufficient for any article to be bought. As for the mat, she declared, when questioned, "that a mat was never *de trop*"—an argument that certainly did not suit failing finances.

If any one had had the pleasure of partaking luncheon with Mr. and Mrs. O'Lavish that morning, such would have gathered from the first-mentioned worthy's manners that something must have happened to him seriously to annoy him. It could not have been another dun—because those annoying affairs were always turning up. If they did not arrive by post, some unwelcome biped, in the shape of a butcher boy, or other shopkeeper's apprentice, walked up with great alacrity, and deposited certain unwelcome epistles in the letter-box.

Whether anything of this sort had happened this morning, I cannot state, since I do not know everything about Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's private affairs. Certain it was, the cold collation that the tenants of Mayfair House sat down to that morning was partaken of in silence.

When well-meaning Martha came in to see whether coals were required, she was promptly bid to return to the kitchen.

I have since learnt that the cause of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's uncomfortable silence was not owing to his dissatisfaction of his wife's morning purchases of mustard pot, split peas, tub, door mat and lettuces. O dear no! 'twas this, and this only: he had received a certain letter from his bankers, which was by no means comforting to him. The fact stood thus: The dependable banking firm of Messrs. Grabgold, Greedyboy, and Co. had, for some time past, not felt satisfied with their client's financial affairs. His account had been overdrawn for some years; so the head of the firm sent him a reminder of how his affairs stood.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, be it known, always

kept his banking affairs to himself; so the utter surprise of his wife, when she heard about the matter, can well be accounted for.

Foolish man this, to keep such matters from the wife of his bosom. Cannot he see the fruit of this folly? Can any one think that Mrs. O'Lavish would have been spending her husband's hard cash in the way she has lately done, if she knew how his monetary affairs really stood? If any of my readers can think so, I am sure I cannot. Let us hope, therefore, from henceforth, now she has been made aware of how matters stand, that, at all events, she will desist from purchasing goods not immediately needed. If she does not do so, I predict some fate for these O'Lavishes, far more formidable than that of merely moving from Mayfair House to a less expensive abode.

CHAPTER XXI.

SOME months, determined reader, have passed away since the mustard pot, and other valuable effects, were obtained by Mrs. O'Lavish. Then her lungs had the pleasure of inhaling May's balmy air, while her eyes could dote upon primroses and violets, and cast interesting, nay, fond glances at a certain pear tree loaded with blooms.

But now, alas ! some months have passed away, and what a change has been wrought in that period. The said violets and primroses have bloomed and scented the air, and have died ; while, instead of white pear blossoms, hang thick clusters of pears, ready to be

gathered and devoured with leisure and delight by the occupants of Mayfair House.

Yes, wondering reader, the O'Lavishs are still in their old domain; but I have to inform you of the sad fact—their days are numbered. Next Tuesday six weeks will see them at a very different abode; comfortable, perchance, but not quite so enchanting in many ways.

I must now proceed to state that the O'Lavishs were not actually turned out of their home by any threatening or insulting letters from their landlord. Happily, this was not the case. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was a man of certain sense, though he did go in heavily for everything he liked and wished for.

It happened one morning that his conscience was aroused as to the real state in which he stood. He asked himself two questions—was

not his income so much?—and did he not spend yearly more than that “so much?” Knowing what he did, it was a moral impossibility to place a cheering “No,” instead of a mournful “Yes.”

“I *am* spending more than I earn,” said he to himself bravely, “and I must put a stop to it by some method.”

And ever since those words had been uttered, Mr. Leonard O’Lavish has been looking out for a more humble habitation. So full, indeed, of this idea has he been, and so continually has the quest been continued, that Mr. Leonard O’Lavish almost fancies that he sees the words “House to let,” or, “To be let,” on the chaste pages of “the most beautiful poem of the age, by the ugliest author in England,” and other often-perused volumes. When Mr.

Leonard O'Lavish, after a substantial dinner off roast beef, boiled chicken, apple fritters, and other niceties, informed his loving wife of his serious intentions of leaving his present dwelling-house, she could scarcely believe her ears. Her cheeks, then happening to be rather flushed, turned the hue of guelder-roses.

“Now Leonard,” said she, “you don’t really mean to tell me you actually think of such a thing?”

Hereat he promptly remarked “that not only he thought of such a thing, but that it was going to be done.”

“Cannot you see, Charlotte,” said he, “that this house is too large and expensive for us? Certainly, we might help things along a little by taking in lodgers, or doing some such lower-

ing act as that. But I have heard what a trouble lodgers are in a private house, and so I do not wish to put either you or myself to that trouble and expense."

"Expense!" said his wife, immediately that word had fallen from his lips. "As to the expense," she continued, "I don't see it would be much of one. You know we have seven chests of drawers, two pianos, fourteen easy-chairs, four tubs, and an unmentionable quantity of saucepans, frying-pans, and other kitchen utensils, and, then, you know we have a new stair carpet, and dear Sniff and Snuff to amuse any lodger."

What was the use of Mrs. O'Lavish enumerating the foregoing household effects, I am at a utter loss to determine, since the said chests of drawers, &c., &c., would be of little satisfaction to the proposed inmates.

If she had mentioned hams and tongues, and the wine her husband had laid down in his cellar, it would have been more to the point, I think.

I feel somewhat glad, for my own sake as well as that of the reader's, that both space and time prohibit me from describing the uncomfortable feelings dwelling in Mrs. O'Lavish's breast at this period. For about a fortnight after the mournful intimation of her husband, she was exceedingly vexed. She felt no pleasure in anything. Reading poems, writing letters, pianoforte-playing, song-singing, and cinder-scraping, were all abandoned for only three things—moping, eating, and sleeping. Nor was this all.

Martha came in for a share of her impetuosity; warlike Tom's existence became more troublous, while Sniff and Snuff received

many a cuff, which uncommon usage gave birth to uncommon growls.

When Martha had, with rather more celerity than usual, cleared away the breakfast apparatus, Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish felt calm enough to question her husband as to whether he had heard of a house suitable for them to exist in?

He informed her that he had heard there were several vacant about the town, but whether they were suitable ones, he had not yet ascertained. Mrs. O'Lavish suggested that as they were to move, they might as well take a house in the Isle of Wight as anywhere else. Whereupon Mr. Leonard O'Lavish promptly observed, "Provided he could have his income of £500 a year, and find a house to let suitable for their occupation"—two vital points that ady had entirely overlooked.

I think, myself, she might have suggested at once a nice little villa at Venice, with hot and cold baths, a skittle-ground, two pianos, and other valuable appointments.

But I wander. No, no; in their' present circumstances, the O'Lavishs must spend a further lease of their lives in smoky Manchester. Let us hope it will be a rather more economical one than that now just about to be terminated within the walls of Mayfair House.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish reclined in his wonted posture on the sofa one evening, scanning the interesting columns of "The Manchester Infomer."

As looking for "Houses to Let" was the sole motive of reading that wonderful weekly impression, we need not marvel that such information as the "Rainfall for the Past Week," or

even "Sad Accident" and "Fatal Affray," was unscanned by his house-hunting eye. "Houses to Let," first and foremost, "Rainfalls for the Past Week," "Sad Accidents," and "Fatal Affrays," last, or nowhere, if you please. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was some time viewing the columns of the said newspaper.

The wants of "Good Plain Cooks," "Quick Housemaids," and "Clean Dairymaids," &c., &c., &c., were rather a nuisance to the observer. And though a certain valuable barn being to let was not so much out of the line of what he sought as the aforesaid "Good Plain Cooks," "Quick Housemaids," and "Clean Dairymaids," still it did not lend any enchantment to the view.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's welkin orbs at length rested on this advertisement:—

“To be Let—A Desirable Dwelling-house, situate on Hack Horse Road. About one mile from Railway Station. It contains three sitting-rooms, five bedrooms, a capital washhouse, beside kitchen, scullery and larder. To be had immediately. Rent, £60. Apply to Messrs. Swindle and Co., No. 10, Tadpole Terrace, Manchester.”

Before Mr. Leonard O’Lavish could have been said to have devoured his breakfast comfortably, that gentleman went off like a shot to hear about this desirable dwelling-house, situate on Hack Horse Road.

Mr. Leonard O’Lavish’s nimble legs did not cease to go until No. 10, Tadpole Terrace was reached, and the presence—not of Mr. Swindle himself (may be, he was too grand a gentleman,

to appear) but one, whom I imagine was one of the "Co.," stood in his presence.

I cannot go into the description of this being further than to state he was blest with a wooden leg; if any one is unsatisfied with this sole statement, I cannot now help it, as I must pass on.

A few questions with this individual, who formed one of the "Co.," concerning the advertised charming dwelling-house, perfectly satisfied Mr. Leonard O'Lavish not to become the occupant of it.

I have since wondered that it deserved the enticing adjective, "charming," since, I understand, it is situate near a tallow-chandler's premises, emitting not very savoury odours; and that, moreover, it is not very far from a glue manufactory, on the north side of the terrace.

Beware, then, ye gentle and simple, when you descry imprinted such happy terms as "Charming Residence," "Desirable Villa," "Pleasant Cottage." Go about it yourselves to certify whether it be true such are respectively "charming," "desirable," and "pleasant;" Mr. Leonard O'Lavish did, most promptly, and the consequence was, he was not inveigled into occupying that "desirable dwelling-house, situate on Hack Horse Road."

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was, therefore, again on the *qui vive* for a house. He pondered over papers, he walked and talked, he made enquiries without end, seemingly to little purpose. What few "pleasant," "desirable," and "charming" abodes there were to be had, had something disagreeable about them.

One certain pleasant-named little villa on

Roaring Bull Road was to be had cheap ; but when everything was found out about the pleasant little villa, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish pettishly declared that it ought to be entitled "Vile Villa," a title, however, that fairly shocked the present occupants.

The tenant of Mayfair House came home that morning in despair of ever meeting with a suitable and pleasant dwelling-house. If walking and talking and inspecting houses can create a keen appetite, then Mr. Leonard O'Lavish must have done justice to certain mutton chops, parsnips and potatoes, that formed his next meal.

Mrs. O'Lavish, after having devoured two chops in perfect silence, possessed spirit enough to question her husband as to his success in house-hunting.

When that gentleman informed her he had had no success, she suggested that they should stay in the house they at present occupied ; since he could not find another one—and they were not given notice to quit by their landlord.

If Mr. Leonard O'Lavish did not possess "thoughts that breathed," he must, I fancy, have possessed "words that burned"—at least, judging from his appearance at that juncture. When he felt calm enough, he let his wife know that he should advertise for a house, if he did not meet with one that would suit him in a few days.

For further information, read chapter the twenty-second.

CHAPTER XXII.

FORTUNATELY for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, he became cognisant of the fact that a small house was to be let unfurnished, on Milkman Road, about two miles from his present abode. Why the house went by the name of "Vine Villa" I have no ghost of a notion, since there was no vine visible in the vicinity. This, possibly, might form an interesting subject of controversy for those exact contributors to "Notes and Queries."

I must at once shun all information as to the way and means the occupants of Mayfair House came to know of this habitation. Nor can I permit myself the time or space to

lumber up these few remaining pages with descriptions of how the valuable effects of Mayfair House were packed up and conveyed to "Vine Villa."

Doubtless, most readers have experienced "a move," or, if not, have seen the carts of other folks' furniture conveyed leisurely along the streets.

Let such, then, imagine a like scene might have been descried on a certain two days in October, from Mayfair House to "Vine Villa," viâ Race Horse Road, Peacock Street, and Lollypop Lane.

Yes, patient reader, as I sit, I fancy I can descry the domestic procession. Chests of drawers, beds, chairs, tables, crockery, pictures, carpets, &c., &c., and again &c., &c., piled up with some art, yet, nevertheless, higgledy-

piggledy, destined to reach a quieter and less expensive habitation than that of Mayfair. There, in that abode, where Queen Order so lately resided, hath King Muddle suddenly entered and claimed residence.

If any musical enthusiast is hoping that the two pianos were conveyed to "Vine Villa," let such hope so no longer. The attic instrument, being the less valuable, has been sold by auction, together with sundry other effects.

'Tis not to be imagined "Vine Villa" is capable of comfortably holding seven chests of drawers, two pianos, ten tester-bedsteads, sixteen fair-sized tables, dozens of chairs, and endless other household lumber. Therefore, the reader must know that about half the total stock of the O'Lavish's property has been brought to the hammer.

Yet I here happily inform all pet-loving individuals that those remarkable quadrupeds, Sniff and Snuff, and warlike Tom, have in no way been in jeopardy of being sold for an old song by the knowing Mr. Ephraim Nobbs, the auctioneer.

“I would rather be sold by auction myself than lose my dear little Sniff and Snuff,” declared Mrs. O’Lavish, warmly, one morning, when her husband suggested those mammals should be thus parted with.

As Mr. Leonard O’Lavish was a humane husband, and did not by any means wish his wife to be sold by auction, he made a joke of it, and declared “he would, in that case, be obliged to ‘knock under.’”

I begin rather to wonder whether any pitiful peruser is deploring the fate of the late in-

habitants of Mayfair House? It may be true that they feel some remorse for them on account of this fact—that they are removing from a greater abode to that of a smaller; and are, in fact, about to live respectably under £500 a year—*alias* within their income—instead of living discredibly on nearly £700 a year, *alias*, beyond their income.

For my part, I feel inclined to put a cheerful colour to this shifting scene. When I put two and two together, and consider that they have now got rid of certain wretched pictures, mentioned some time ago in these pages; that they have now no preposterous number of chests of drawers; and that their tables are lessened to a useful number; that they have moved to a domain with £40 a year rent, instead of £60; that their rates and taxes are much

milder in amount ; when I consider all these things, I say to myself, I rejoice that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had the manly pluck to take the great step he has done.

It took nearly a month to get what is generally termed "settled," in Vine Villa ; and very queer did the occupants feel for the first few weeks.

However, they gradually became used to the little habitation, as did the warlike Tom, and those acute creatures, Sniff and Snuff. Mayfair House was now deemed as a palace, and whenever it was mentioned, Mrs. O'Lavish exhibited a sad countenance, and felt quite sentimental about it.

It might be supposed that the girl Martha was innately delighted with the change, since the rooms were fewer and smaller to scrub,

and there was not nearly so much furniture to anoint with furniture-oil. The cook, too, no doubt, was glad on account of certain oven derangements, obliging the baking apparatus to be suspended; which, therefore, saved her the troublous task of perpetually peeping into the oven for the sole welfare of certain tarts and pies.

This, no doubt, will be but a temporary arrangement, since I gather from certain knowledge of Mrs. O'Lavish, she will prefer to have her baking done at home.

I have not now much more space left me between this page and the last one, yet I wish to inform those who care to know, that Vine Villa was graced with a snug little garden, though very much smaller than that at Mayfair House. It was well supplied with ever-

greens of various kinds ; many, of course, defying my limited botanical knowledge.

I am glad to relate there was room for Mr. O'Lavish's favourite garden-seat, though there was no need of his lawn-mower. It is, therefore, a good thing I consider he parted with that implement at the auction. The brevity of this chapter, I hope, will be excused by all lovers of long ones. And now, dear reader, accompany me to chapter the twenty-third.

CHAPTER XXIII.

WHEN Mr. Leonard O'Lavish had fully satisfied himself with devouring some fresh prawns, together with buttered toast and some capital coffee, he arose from his repast, and paced the small breakfast-room.

For a minute or two, he whistled the noble air of "Jerusalem the Golden," when, immediately afterwards, might have been heard the secular air of "Pretty little Sarah," which was as quickly changed for "Slap Bang."

It was only the four walls of that apartment, gentle reader, not to forget Sniff and Snuff, that had the pleasure of hearing those touching airs.

“Bonnie Dundee” was in progress of being whistled, when the appearance into the room of Mrs. O’Lavish interrupted the performer. Her husband began immediately to inform her that he had been thinking of taking a vehicle, and calling on the Revd. Horatio Rowland, and Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. The object of this was to inform those two gentlemen of the O’Lavish’s departure from the fair roof of Mayfair House to that of Vine Villa, of which fact they were, as yet, totally ignorant.

Mrs. O’Lavish declared, “that since they had removed into a smaller house, she felt little inclined to keep up the acquaintance of her old friends.” She went on to state, “it would now become unpleasant to her to ask them to dinners and teas, now that her house—

hold effects had been so much diminished ;” and she ended in saying, “she did not feel inclined to give such entertainments any more.”

A dreary assertion that her husband little wished to follow out. Much more such sad talk as this was uttered by Mrs. Leonard O’Lavish ; yet it did not prevent the master of “Vine Villa” from hiring a horse and vehicle, and going to the abodes of the Revd. Horatio Rowland, and Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald.

Mr. Leonard O’Lavish questioned the wisdom of his wife minding these friends knowing the true state of the case. Was not the Revd. Horatio Rowland their own dear Vicar, and still their friend ? and was not Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald also their charming and faithful acquaintance ?

Did it really matter one Brazil nut if they knew the real reason why they had thus shifted into a less expensive domain? Mr. Leonard O'Lavish believed, certainly not.

Yes, gentle reader, the horse and vehicle have been obtained; and the hirer is now seated in the same, his legs comfortably enveloped in a coffee-coloured rug. "Joe" (the laconic name of the horse) is now being whipped into his first trot by the nimble hand of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. Most people like quick travelling, whether it be by rail or road. So did the driver of "Joe." It was speedily found that "Joe" did not much like to go, until the said animal was compelled to by incessant reminders from the peevish lash. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish soon found afterwards what kind of beast he was driving; for, on re-

turning homewards, "Joe" suddenly desired to go, till his happy goal, the stable, was reached once again.

When the wilful beast was placed into the well-known hands of the ostler, that biped, with a knowing grin depicted on his countenance, volunteered to ask Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, "whether 'Joe' weren't a deal faster a comin' 'ome, than a goin'?"—a fact which the able driver of the said beast declared was perfectly true.

When Mr. Leonard O'Lavish arrived at the Vicarage, he had not the dissatisfaction of being informed the Vicar was out; so he walked in, leaving his equine servant in the hands of a page, noticeable more for his array of bright buttons, than any rare intellectual traits depicted in his countenance.

When the morning-caller had been ushered into the Vicar's study, he found the pastor seated in his arm-chair, near the table, upon which were displayed various books on religious subjects. Some were laid open ; while some reclined closed, with various markers placed within them. From the general appearance of things, any intruder might have imagined the Vicar was preparing his next Sabbath oration. That Mr. Leonard O'Lavish did think so, we may reasonably suspect.

When a guileless "good morning" had been uttered by the Vicar, and a like gracious wish had been expressed by his Christian visitor, he bade him be seated by the fireside.

"I hope I am not disturbing your work by my calling at this hour," said Mr. Leonard O'Lavish. "I should not have come," he con-

tinued, "but that I have something I very much wish to tell you."

A very imaginative parson might have thought it was some parochial affair that his late parishioner alluded to. Perhaps he came with a scheme for obtaining funds to purchase a new organ; or that some new footstools might be supplied, which, as the Vicar had an eye for decency, he was fully aware were greatly needed.

But five minutes afterwards, such imaginations were soon dispelled from the Vicar's mind. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish filled the Vicar's ears, for nearly an hour, with a somewhat mournful account of his domestic troubles; and, with truthfulness, informed him the reason of his quitting the lovely Mayfair habitation, to abide in Vine Villa.

For a moment, the exhausted Vicar turned on the parochial case of Susan Tippet; but he soon found that Susan Tippet's grave condition failed to arouse any sympathy, as the worser case was deemed to be his own.

The Revd. Horatio Rowland heartily applauded his late parochial friend for taking the wise step he had done. He went on to moralize about the matter, and said, that thousands of souls would be made happier if they had only the moral force to take the ugly bull, debt, by the horns, and declare they would keep him at bay. He declared, "he considered living beyond one's income was just as much a sin and a shame as cheating one's neighbour out of his rightful property."

When the Vicar had ceased his extempore oration, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish expressed a

hope he would soon come and visit him in his new abode—a wish that the Vicar promised he would fulfil.

The bell, at this juncture, having been energetically agitated, a decanter of goodly port, with a plate well filled with biscuits, was, without delay, brought into the study. I suppose this was the Vicar's custom whenever any morning visitors made their appearance, since they were produced without any previous command.

During the wine-sipping, common topics of the day were duly discussed, though at times it assumed a clerical character, as livings and church steeples became the theme of conversation.

As the Vicar was naturally fond of dogs, he made kind enquiries after the welfare of Sniff

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and Snuff, which was certainly pleasing to their master. Whether the Vicar possessed any dislike in his bosom for the feline specie, I cannot assert; but he never said one word about warlike Tom. Still, however, that furry quadruped can exist without any kind enquiries from the Revd. Horatio Rowland.

When a little more port wine had been consumed, and a little more genial chat indulged in, Mr. Leonard O'Lavish arose, and bade his revd. friend a hearty farewell. What more he did that day, shall be stated in my next and last chapter.

CHAPTER THE LAST.

WHEN Mr. Leonard O'Lavish left the Vicarage, that wonderful animal "Joe," had the trouble of trotting to Lovely Villa, the abode of Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald. A certain portion of the journey was remarkably quick; but when "Joe" was conducted round a certain fiery-coloured brick wall, the rate of miles per hour was greatly diminished, for the knowing beast had a notion of his own that round the said fiery-coloured brick wall was not the nearest way home to his stable. Certainly that animal was right in his conception, but still he had the mortification of traversing the dusty highway some few additional miles.

My limited space will not allow me to state all that took place that day, nor the long confabulation that ensued between Mr. Leonard O'Lavish and his old acquaintance. Yet I must state this happy fact—that his visit was a timely one; for, had he been fifteen minutes later, Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald would not have been found under the roof of Lovely Villa.

When the last mentioned worthy heard the news of Mr. Leonard O'Lavish's removal to "Vine Villa," he looked much surprised, yet said nothing. He was speedily informed that Mayfair House was found much too expensive, which the inhabitant of Lovely Villa silently believed.

Mr. O'Lavish, during his call, did not fail to deplore being so far from his true and old

friend, and he went on to declare that he hoped that the greater distance that was now between them, would not hinder visits being made less often—a sentiment in which Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald totally concurred. This *tête-à-tête* was not so long as that with the Revd. Horatio Rowland ; hunger, no doubt, had something to do with making the meeting a brief one. Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald must have been very desirous of putting certain mutton-chops out of sight in order to fill up a certain vacuum, which we know Dame Nature invariably abhors.

As for Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, no one need expend a particle of pity on him, since he has been well supplied with refreshments partaken of at the Vicarage.

For myself, I should feel more inclined to commiserate dodgy "Joe," since he has been going and standing still now for some hours. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish regaled his wife's ears with a fulsome account of his visits, which, I thought, rather amused that lady. She was glad to hear that Mr. Christopher Ferdinand Hubert Dundonald was not out when he arrived at Lovely Villa.

I know not what put it into her head, but the wife of the master of Vine Villa particularly enquired whether he saw the Vicar's wife, and, if so, how she was attired. Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was delivered from the botheration of describing the feminine garb, owing to the absence of that devoted Christian.

Yet I am disposed to think, that even if her husband had seen the Vicar's wife, he would

not have been up to describing it well and accurately, or, at all events, to the satisfaction of the enquiring Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish.

A few minutes after this, a terrific yawn might have been heard from the direction of the sofa. This was rendered by Mr. Leonard O'Lavish, who had stretched himself out after the manner that some gentlemen delight to do.

We may suppose, I think, that morning-calling, tittle-tattle, and Joe-driving were rather wearing to the yawning mortal; yet I would remind him how seldom he went upon such errands.

Kindly Christians, pity rather the *elite*,—or by whatever term they may love to be called—who, nearly every blessed week-day, have to go on such delightful missions, willy-nilly.

"They, poor slaves, must, on no account, put off this kind of work, lest, by so doing, they mortally offend some delightful duchess, or, haply, some other noticeable noodle.

Let me now revert to certain matters with regard to the O'Lavishs. The clerkly Tim and Jim were duly informed concerning their parents' movements. Those gentlemen have, during the last three years, been steadily busy with their ledger work. Their salaries have been raised a little, and they have given much satisfaction to their master through their steady behaviour.

Yet, it need not be doubted, that Tim and Jim have had their troubles. What mortal on "this casual ball" has not? But I wish not to fill up the few remaining pages left me with any melancholy information concerning

this clerkly couple. Once a year regularly, and that usually when keen December scatters her snows, do Tim and Jim visit their parents, till the precious vacation has passed away, and they return to their duties on sloping deal stools.

I have heard it whispered (yet I must doubt it, as I do certain telegrams I descry sometimes in the "Times") that Jim will shortly possess a wife to add to his earthly bliss. Whether Tim will do likewise, is a question to be solved in the future.

Some individuals deem it wise to marry as soon as possible—then such, I doubt not, will congratulate Jim on this score, and may advise Tim to do the same.

Since the O'Lavishs have occupied "Vine Villa," their entertainments have been fewer,

and their extravagances have not been so grievous. To be sure, Martha's wages have been raised to the alarming amount of ten shillings yearly, a rule Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish always now persisted in, to encourage her domestics to stay with her, since she has found how exceedingly inconvenient it is perpetually instructing new and ignorant ones. Here, I must admire her wisdom: and I only wish other thoughtless housewives would follow her good example. Did they but know it, it would save them a world of trouble and vexation, and be a boon to both parties.

Before I close this little work, I should like to make a few financial statements for the edification of those who should know about household expenditures.

When the O'Lavishes dwelt in Mayfair

House, their income, we know, was £500 a year; and, what I will term their "out go," came to nearly £600. So, any one can see at a glance; this could not have gone on long without a smash, or Mr. Leonard O'Lavish becoming a bankrupt.

The casual house expenses (by house expenses, I mean, rent, taxes, painting, papering, and such-like items) came to nearly £250, so there was not much left for meats and drinks; and bodily requisites, and nothing to deposit in the bank.

But things became totally changed for the better when Vine Villa was entered. As before stated, the rent of that edifice was £40 yearly, the rates and taxes much lower; the rooms not nearly so many to paper, and otherwise to adorn; so that the occupiers could put by a

full £100 a year, which, I am proud to state, they made a point of doing year by year. All know, in the dispensation of this world, it is but prudent to provide, in the only way man is able, for old age or accident. How much misery is occasioned by the daily neglect of saving a few shillings unto this end.

Mr. Leonard O'Lavish certainly became more prudent. No doubt sad cases of distress he had often seen around him, through the bread-winners of large families being suddenly taken away—a thought that one day became harboured in the breast of the master of Vine Villa.

From that time, he began to be somewhat of a saving soul, which one can only wish other spendthrifts would become. That dependable banking firm, Messrs. Grabgold, Greedyboy

and Co., must have been well aware that Mr. Leonard O'Lavish was, at last, saving money, instead of perpetually overdrawing his account for small amounts—a fact, we may suppose, in which that firm inwardly rejoiced, since, doubtless, they would much rather some few fifty pounds were placed to his credit, than an unwelcome over-draw to that amount.

The days and weeks pass by more comfortably to the O'Lavishs in their humble Vine Villa than they did in the more pretentious Mayfair House, with its becoming flight of steps, its flowery borders, and gamboge-tinted gravel paths.

No doubt Mrs. Leonard O'Lavish will relish that wonderful inclusive work—"A little Information about Everything," much more when she reclines in her easy-chair, perusing

it week by week since those horrible brother-ghosts—Debt and Dun—have been well laid, and, therefore, cannot haunt her any more.

And now, O reader, it has become necessary that I leave the O'Lavishs "to gang their own gait," since I cannot here "further seek their merits to disclose," or regale the reader with more of their shortcomings.

Doubtless many readers have long ago become nauseated with hearing so much about them, and it may even be true that the more patient of my readers have, ere this, shown symptoms of weariness.

To such, then, it will be but sorry news when I now state that I may be enticed one day to indite a further history of the beings I have brought together in this story. Yet the title, I promise them, shall be rather more

pleasant than the one this volume bears. All know—and no one better than the mortal who holds this plume—that nothing is certain in this world, save death ; therefore, I beg all not to be too hopeful in a frail promise, lest it should be unperformed. In the meantime, gentle reader, I hope and trust you will not quite forget, “How they Mismanaged their House on £500 a Year.”

THE END.





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